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PREFACE

An iconographical survey in the Nepal Valley was carried out jointly by the Department of Archaeology and Culture of His Majesty's Government, Nepal, and the Archaeological Survey of India under the direction of the author during the months of May-June, 1963. The icons in the temples and the monasteries as well as the stray images in the Kathmandu Valley were studied with adequate photographic documentation.

Nepal has an immensely rich variety of image types both of the Brahmanical and Buddhist religions. The earliest images available in Nepal are mainly Brahmanical and few images of Buddhist affiliation have been found prior to the seventh century. The Valley has yielded fine images of numerous Vaishṇava and Śaiva deities and of Sūrya and Brahmā and various forms of Devīs, including Pārvatī and the Seven Mothers made between the fifth and tenth centuries. The Vaishṇava deities include Vishṇu as Śrīdhara, Garuḍa-Nārāyaṇa, Seshaśāyī and Viśvarūpa and the Vaishṇava incarnations of Bhū-Varāha, Narasiṁha, Trivikrama and Kṛishṇa as Kāliya-damana. The Trivikrama images which incidentally constitute the earliest dated sculptures of Nepal are informed by elemental power and dynamism, characteristic of the early Chalukyan art of India. The sculpture of Vishṇu as Viśvarūpa is a unique piece, strongly reminiscent of the famous seven-headed Śiva from Parel (Bombay) in conception and expression. Nepal has also yielded numerous *Śiva-liṅgas* of the symbolic as well as the iconic types, the latter comprising largely *chaturmukha-liṅgas,* besides figures of Gaṇeśa and Kumāra and excellent seated images of Śiva-Pārvatī enjoying domestic bliss in Kailāśa often combining the Gaṅgādhara aspect, which have an unmistakable Rāshṭrakūta flavour.

Like the Brahmanical images, the earlier Buddhist images too, are seen to have striking affinities with the Indian images in theme as well as in treatment and comprise simple but elegantly modelled figures of Buddha, Lokeśvara, Tārā, and Māyā Devī. The artists of Nepal drew ample inspiration from the various Gupta and post-Gupta art-styles of India but transformed their art creations with the magic touch of their individual genius. From the tenth century onwards, the art-idioms and conventions of Nepal increasingly assert themselves, showing dominance of local features and physiognomy and Nepal is seen to develop her own style of sculpture marked by a peculiar innate grace and daintiness. The art conventions of Nepal tend towards greater stylization and complexity in course of the centuries. The plastic activity continues in full vigour till the close of the seventeenth century, though the momentum is not completely lost even during the eighteenth century.

The images are made of stone, bronze or brass, wood and terracotta and largely come from the numerous Brahmanical temples, Buddhist shrines and monasteries which dot the Valley. Particularly interesting are the figures on the wooden struts, which reveal an amazing variety of Lokesvara types and figures of different deities including the *nakshatras* (constellations) on the Buddhist shrines and monasteries and deities of the Hindu pantheon with a predominance of the figures of Bhairavas and Chaṇḍīs on the Brahmanical temples.

Among the rare iconographic types may be mentioned Siva as Ekapāda-Trimūrti, Chandra (the moon-god) riding a chariot of geese, Mahisha-sambara and Vishṇu in the *ardha-nārī* (androgynous) form. Four-armed and eight-armed images of the last deity are found in large numbers throughout the Valley together with the more familiar types of the Vishṇu icon.

From the eleventh century onwards, hundreds of Buddhist deities were conceived and fashioned under the influence of Tantrayāna and Vajrayāna sects which gained special popularity in Nepal. Many of these reveal a marked impact of Tāntric Śaivism which flourished in the Valley simultaneously. The interfusion between Buddhism and Brahmanism led to complex iconographical forms revealing Buddhist deities with Brahmanical features and Brahmanical deities with Buddhist traits, the latter exemplified by a number of Saiva and Vaishnava deities holding among other weapons *vajra* and *vajra-ghaṇṭa,* which are usually associated with the Vajrayāna deities. The iconographical synthesis between Buddhism and Brahmanism is graphically illustrated by some Tāntric figures of Mahākāla in the Sundari Chowk, Patan, depicting on their pedestal a frieze showing a combined pattern of the *stūpa* alternating with the *Śiva-liṅga.*

In the following pages an attempt has been made to classify the rich iconographical wealth of the Nepal Valley and present a summary of the results of the iconographical survey which was undertaken as a project of the Indian Cooperation Mission in Nepal with the active help and cooperation of the Department of Archaeology and Culture of His Majesty's Government, Nepal.

The author is grateful to Shri S. S. Bhandarkar who as Member (Education) of the Indian Cooperation Mission conceived the project and provided all encouragement and facilities for its execution. Needless to say that the accomplishment of this Survey was due largely to the ungrudging help and active cooperation of Shri R. J. Thapa, Director of the Department of Archaeology and Culture of HMG, Nepal. I am also beholden to Shri Purnaharsha Bajracharya of the same Department and to my colleague Dr. N. R. Banerjee for many valuable suggestions. I am happy to record my deep appreciation of the artistic acumen and dedicated work of Shri Ranjit Gupta, Photographer of the Archaeological Survey of India, who took all the photographs and to Shri S. P. Chatterjee, Artist of the Survey, who designed the layout of the cover. I am specially grateful to Shri K. M. Srivastava who took all pains to correct the proofs finally. Shri S. R. Varma was always on his feet to see the book through the Press. Thanks are also due to Kumari Arundhati Banerji for necessary help in going through the proofs and Shri P. K. Trivedi, who gladly accepted to prepare the index within a short time.

The opinion expressed and the interpretations offered in this book are my own and do not necessarily reflect the views of either the Archaeological Survey of India or the Department of Archaeology of His Majesty's Government of Nepal.

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New Year's Day, 1984.

KRISHNA DEVA

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Himalayan Kingdom of Nepal has an enchanting variety of topographical features. Its southern geographical division comprises the Tarai region which merges into the plains of India. The Tarai is bounded on the north by the gentle ridges of the Siwaliks followed by the higher Mahabharat hills, beyond which nestles the lush green valley of Kathmandu, the centre of Nepal's economy and culture, where 'there are nearly as many temples as houses, and as many idols as inhabitants, there not being a fountain, a river, or a hill within its limits, that is not consecrated to one or other of the Hindoo deities'[1]. To the north of the Kathmandu Valley rise the successive ranges of the snow-capped Himalayas till the plateau of Tibet, 'the roof of the world', is reached. Thus situated between India on the south and Tibet on the north, Nepal was destined to be a veritable reservoir of cultural currents flowing from both her neighbours. Nepal had the genius to assimilate these currents and transform and catalyse them into something which became truly Nepalese and blended with her own cultural milieu. This cultural synthesis is reflected in all spheres of Nepal's life and thought, including her social institutions, her religious beliefs and practices and her art, architecture and iconography.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Although Lord Buddha was born in the Nepal Tarai, the light of Buddhist art, religion and philosophy did not illumine Nepal until the time of Emperor Aśoka (273-232 BC). This pious emperor, who was responsible for spreading the teachings of the Master in many lands of Asia, not only made a pilgrimage to Lumbini and Nigali Sagar in the Nepal Tarai, the birth-places respectively of the Buddha and Kanakamuni Buddha, and recorded the fact by setting up pillar-edicts at these sites, but is believed by tradition to have visited the Kathmandu Valley and erected *stūpas* at Lalitpur (Patan), which indeed resemble the known Aśokan *stūpas* in general appearance and proportion. There is also a persistent tradition that his daughter Charumati was married to a local prince and lived in a monastery built by her at Deo-Patan where a Buddhist establishment is still known as Chabahal *(Chārumatī-vihāra)*. Be that as it may, there is indisputable evidence of Aśoka's pilgrimage to the Nepal Tarai as also of an evangelical mission having been sent during his reign to the Himalayan countries, under the leadership of Kāsapagota, the inscription on whose relic-casket found at Sanchi extols him as 'the teacher of all the Himavat region.[2] The cultural contacts thus initiated with India grew ever stronger through the succeeding ages and encompassed almost all spheres of Nepalese life and activities.

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[1] Kirkpatrick, *An Account of the Kingdom of Nepal* (London 1811), p. 150. The term 'Hindoo deities' is liberally used by the author to include also 'Buddhist' deities.

[2] John Marshall, *The Monuments of Sanchi* (Calcutta 1940), Vol. I, p. 8

It is well-known that the main ruling dynasties of Nepal were of the Indian origin and the Lichchhavis were the earliest such dynasty, known to history, who organized civil life in the Kathmandu Valley and laid the foundation of her art and culture as expressed through the surviving specimens of images and sculptures, coins and copious Sanskrit inscriptions engraved in the Classical Gupta script of India. The Lichchhavis came probably from the homonymous republican tribe which flourished in the contiguous region of North Bihar from the sixth century BC onwards and were celebrated in the contemporary Buddhist and Jaina literature. Subsequently, they were commemorated in the coins and inscriptions of the early Gupta emperors of India whose rise to power was facilitated by a matrimonial alliance with them. Nepal is mentioned as a border kingdom of the Gupta dominion in the Allahabad Pillar inscription of Samudragupta who took pride in calling himself as 'the grandson of the Lichchhavis.' The Lichchhavis of Nepal who ruled from *circa* AD 400 to 850 (but for an interregnum of 70 years from AD 571 to 640) were practically contemporaries of the Guptas of India and their immediate successors and shared a common cultural heritage of script, literary language, religious beliefs and traditions and artistic inspiration.

Nepal came under the political influence of Tibet during the seventh century when King Aṁśuvarman of Nepal entered into a matrimonial alliance with king Tsron-Tsan-Gam-Po of Tibet by giving away his daughter, who was the first to carry Buddhism to the land of Tibet. The Tibetan king subsequently married a Chinese princess who also brought Buddhist gods to Tibet. The grateful Tibetans adore the Nepalese and Chinese princesses respectively as incarnations of Bhṛkuṭī and Tārā. The other famous contemporaries of Aṁśuvarman were king Harshavardhana of India and the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang who has left an account of Nepal. He praises king Aṁśuvarmanan's wisdom and literary attainments and the skill of the Nepalese craftsmen and says that there were two thousand Buddhist monks of the Hīnayāna as well as Mahāyāna sects and that the Buddhist monasteries and Hindu temples flourished side by side.

The Lichchhavis, some of whose later princes were connected matrimonially with the Maukharis[1] and the Later Guptas of Magadha, were succeeded by the Thakuris who in turn were followed by the early Mallas by AD 1200. It is not unlikely that the Mallas originated from the homonymous republican tribe of Kusinagar and Pawa of the time of the Buddha, who are referred to in the early Buddhist literature of India, besides the *Mahābhārata* and the *Manusmriti*. During the rule of the Thakuris and the early Mallas, north-eastern India first came under the rule of the Pālas (*circa* AD 750-1150) and then of the Senas (AD 1150-1280). Never was the cultural intercourse between India and Nepal more brisk and fruitful than during these centuries. Two events during these centuries, however, are worth noting, one is the establishment of the Nepalese Samvat, beginning AD 879, which is still popular and the other is the foundation of an independent kingdom of Tirhut by Nānyadeva with Simraongarh in the Nepal Tarai as its capital in AD 1097.

[1] Vatsa-devī the mother of the Lichchhavi king Jayadeva II was the daughter of Maukhari Bhoga-varman and the daughter's daughter of the Later Gupta ruler of Magadha, Ādityasena (Paśupati Inscription of Jayadeva II dated 153=AD 743).

Nānyadeva was probably a feudatory of the Chalukyan king Vikramāditya V (*circa* 1076-1126) and calls himself as 'the ornament of the Karnataka family'.

For five centuries from the thirteenth to the eighteenth the Mallas moulded the course of the history of Nepal and left a deep impress on her culture. The Newar element in Nepalese culture became progressively dominant and besides Sanskrit, Newari also got a place in royal charters and donative and votive records. The Newars have been known for their skill as artists and craftsmen and excel in the art of metal-casting which has been practised in Nepal since at least the sixth century AD. During the reign of the fourth Malla king, Jayabhīmadeva, a Nepalese artist called Aniko was invited in AD 1260 to Tibet for the construction of the Golden *Stūpa* there. From Tibet, he was commissioned to China at the invitation of the Chinese emperor Kublai Khan who was so impressed with Aniko's skill in bronze-casting, painting and artistry in clay and lacquer that he first elevated him as the chief of the metal-workers and subsequently as the controller of the Imperial studios. Thus the credit of introducing bronze-casting in Tibet and China goes to a Nepalese artist.

From the thirteenth century onwards the political history of Nepal was chequered and replete with internecine strife and wars among the rival dynasties except for short interludes. Nepal also experienced a disastrous invasion in AD 1349 by Shamsuddin Ilyas, Sultan of Bengal, who plundered the Valley and defiled and destroyed the temples and monasteries including the Paśupati temple and the Svayambhū-*chaitya*.

In the history of Nepal AD 1480 is a landmark when her three principal kingdoms of Nepal, Bhatgaon and Patan were united under the same house and distributed among the three sons of king Jayayaksha Malla. But the centrifugal tendencies did not take long to assert themselves and the three kingdoms, which were ruled by a succession of chiefs of varying ability, again resumed their orgy of mutual intrigues and feuds which were often joined by some of the *Bāisi* or *Chaubīsī*, the 22 or 24 principalities of the peripheral regions of the Valley. Of the latter the Gorkha was an important principality whose king Prithvinarayana Shah unified the warring principalities and united the whole of Nepal under one flag in A.D. 1769. The present ruler of Nepal is tenth in descent from king Prithvinarayana Shah.

RELIGIOUS INSPIRATION OF NEPALESE ART

BUDDHISM

All principal religious currents which stirred India also registered their ripples in Nepal. Historically, Buddhism was the first established religion which flourished in Nepal perhaps as early as the time of Aśoka. The early form of Buddhism believed in worshipping the Buddha through symbols and regarded the *chaitya* or the *stūpa* as an important cult object symbolizing the Master. The immense popularity of *chaitya*-worship in Nepal is indeed a relic of the Hīnayāna stage and well-finished Lichchhavi *chaityas* of pristine hemispherical form are found in hundreds scattered all over the length and breadth of the Kathmandu Valley. It must, however, be admitted that except for the earliest *stūpas* at Patan which are attributed to Aśoka, no other monumental *stūpas* of the pristine

Hīnayāna form have yet been identified in Nepal. It is not unlikely that the older folk divinities like *Yakshās* and *Nāgās* which may have commanded popular worship in Nepal as they did in India, were assimilated in the Buddhist cult as acolytes or subordinate deities. The earliest image of the so-called Yaksha-Bodhisattva discovered in the Valley and recently published[1] is more likely to represent a *Yaksha* (presumably as an attendant of a Buddhist *chaitya*) than a Bodhisattva who is rarely represented even in India at such an early age.

In course of time Hīnayāna which comprised of the Śrāvakayāna and Pratyekabuddhayāna and was a strict and rigorous system, gave place to the more humane Mahāyāna or Bodhisattvayāna, symbolized by the compassion of Bodhisattva Padmapāṇi who is believed to have refused *nirvāṇa* until the entire mankind had attained deliverance. Mahāyāna soon swept the Kathmandu valley in Nepal with the result that the simple *chaitya* begins to be decorated with Buddhist images and we start getting images of the Buddha from *circa* fifth century and of the Bodhisattvas from *circa* sixth century onwards. Then followed successively the Tantrayāna and the Vajrayāna, each ensuring further loosening of the rigours. This is no place to go into their metaphysics and philosophy which are indeed subtle and abtuse. Suffice it to say that to the solid base of the *vijñānavāda* of the Yogāchāra school, which was an improvement on the *śūnyavāda* of the Mādhyamikas, the Vajrayānists added a new element of *mahāsukha* which marked the culmination of the liberalising process of Buddhist religion and philosophy. "Vajrayāna introduced many innovations of a revolutionary character. It introduced, for instance, the theory of the five Dhyānī-Buddhas as embodiments of the five Skandhas or cosmic elements and formulated the theory of the Kulas or families of the five Dhyānī-Buddhas from which deities emerge according to need. It introduced the worship of the Prajñā or Śakti in Buddhism for the first time, and a host of other things including a large number of gods and goddesses, their Sādhanas for the purpose of visualization, Mantras, Tantras, Yantras, Mudrās, Maṇḍalas, mystic realizations and psychic exercises of the most subtle character."[2]

Vajrayāna was indeed a catholic and eclectic system which combined the tenets and practices of the Buddhist Mantrayāna as well as Tāntric Śaivism and included in its purview the subtlest mystic experience and philosophical speculations to the grossest rites and practices. Vajrayāna also believed in psychic culture and the attainment of supernormal powers known as *siddhis*. Distinguished adepts in these were known as *Siddhas*. These spiritual attainments were often accompanied by esoteric rites and practices involving not only killing of animals and consumption of wine and meat but also indulgence in sexual orgies. Such permissiveness was often abused and exploited by the lesser adepts as well as the black sheep and led in course of time to the debasement of these exalted cults.

Whereas under the Mahāyāna the pantheon had been limited to the Buddhas and the Bodhisattvas and just a few goddesses like Tārā and Bhṛikuṭī, under the new dispensation of Vajrayāna there was a vast increase of the pantheon and a prominence was given

[1] N. R. Banerjee and B. K. Rijal, "Three Early Sculptures in Stone from the National Museum, Kathmandu", *Ancient Nepal*, No. 4, pp. 37-38, pl. V

[2] B. Bhattacharyya, *The Indian Buddhist Iconography* (Calcutta 1958), pp. 11-12

to the female element called Śakti or Prajñā. Under Vajrayāna, deification was carried to an excess and all conceivable objects and ideas including even abstract and philosophical concepts, were anthropomorphised. Further many fierce divinities were introduced and the female deities were often represented in the *yab-yum* posture, i.e. in physical union with their consorts. Not being content with the five Kuleśas or Dhyānī-Buddhas, Vajrayāna conceived of the Ādibuddha or Primordial Buddha as the progenitor of even the Kuleśas and the Ādibuddha was given the iconographic form of either Vajradhara or Vajrasattva, who was often represented with his Śaktī in *yab-yum*. It may be noted here that cultural intercourse with Tibet also played a considerable part in the multiplication of the fierce divinities and the deities represented in the *yab-yum* posture.

The cult of the Dhyānī-Buddhas, who are assigned definite positions in the cosmogony of the *stūpa* is quite popular in Nepal and may have been introduced from eastern India as early as the seventh century AD.

The cult of Ādibuddha, which is equally popular in Nepal, grew in the Buddhist monasteries of eastern India not earlier than the tenth century. According to the *Svayambhū Purāṇa*, Ādibuddha first manifested himself in Nepal in the form of a flame of fire and Mañjuśrī erected a temple over it. This temple is identified as the *Svayambhū-chaitya* which is the most celebrated Buddhist monument in Nepal. According to a variant local tradition, Svayambhū is the self-born or the Ādibuddha who manifested himself in the form of a lotus.

Since the five Dhyānī-Buddhas played a primary role in the formulation of the Buddhist pantheon, we may define their characteristics indicating the deities which emanate from each.

The progenitor of the *dvesha* family is Dhyānī-Buddha Akshobhya, who is blue in colour, exhibits *bhūsparśa-mudrā* and presides over the eastern direction. His Śakti is Lochanā, his Bodhisattva is Vajrapāṇi, his cognizance is *vajra* and a pair of elephants constitutes his vehicle. Heruka, Hayagrīva, Yamāri. Chaṇḍaroshaṇa and Buddhakapāla are the principal gods, while Mahāchīna-Tārā, Jāngulī, Ekajaṭā, Prajñāpāramitā, Mahā-mantrānusāriṇī, Mahāpratyaṅgirā and Nairātmā are the principal goddesses emanating from him.

The *moha* family is presided over by Dhyānī-Buddha Vairochana who holds *dharma-chakra-mudrā* and is white in colour. His Śaktī is Vajradhātvīśvarī and his Bodhisativa is Sāmantabhadra. He is assigned a place in the centre of the *stūpa* and is often shown between the east and the south. Among deities owing their origin to him may be mentioned Mārīchī, Ushṇīshavijayā, Sitātapatrā, Aparājitā, Mahāsahasrapramardinī, Vajravārāhī, Kshiti-garbha and Maitreya.

The *rāga* family originates from Amitābha who is red in colour, shows the *dhyāna-mudrā* and presides over the western direction. His cognizance is lotus and *vāhana* is a pair of peacocks. His Śaktī is Pāṇḍarā and his Bodhisattva is Padmapāṇī. Prominent deities of this family include Lokeśvara, Saptaśatika, Hayagrīva, Chandraprabha, Jālinīprabha, Kurukullā, Bhṛikuṭī and Mahāsitavatī.

The originator of the *chintāmaṇi* family is Dhyānī-Buddha Ratnasambhava who is of yellow colour, holds the *varada-mudrā* and presides over the south. His Śaktī is Māmakī,

his Bodhisattva is Ratnapāṇi, while a pair of lions constitutes his vehicle. Prominent deities emanating from him include Jambhala, Uchchhushma-jambhala, Ganganagañja, Jnānaketu, Khagarbha, Pratibhānakūṭa, Mahāpratisarā, Vasudhārā and the Pāramitās.

The *samaya* family is presided over by Dhyānī-Buddha Amoghasiddhi who is of green colour and exhibits *abhaya-mudrā*. He presides over the north direction, his cognizance being *viśvavajra* and vehicle a pair of Garuḍas. His Śaktī is Tārā, while his Boddhisattva is Viśvapāṇi. Principal deities of this family are Vishkambhin, Vighnāntaka, Khadiravani-Tārā, Dhanada-Tārā, Parṇaśabarī, Mahāmāyūrī, Vajraśriṅkhalā and the twelve *Dhāriṇīs*.

VAISHṆAVISM

Vaishṇavism, which originated as a syncretistic cult combining the elements of the Vedic sun-god Āditya-Vishṇu, the cosmic god Nārāyaṇa and the epic hero Vāsudeva-Krishṇa, grew into a mighty religious movement in India by the Gupta age and had a profound impact on Nepal. It is, therefore, not without significance that the earliest dated images, hitherto found in the Nepal Valley, belong to the Vaishṇava sect. Under the upsurge of *bhakti* Vaishṇavism absorbed a multiplicity of tenets and concepts and its re-oriented ideology admitted the worship of Lord Vishṇu under three main forms or aspects, viz. *para* or the highest, the *vyūha* or the emanatory and the *vibhava* or the incarnatory. Vishṇu was conceived and worshipped in Nepal, as in India, in all the three aspects mentioned above. It is, however, noteworthy that between the fifth and eighth centuries when we first encounter the Vaishṇava images in Nepal, the heroic incarnatory forms, capable of dramatic representation, viz. Trivikrama, Varāha, Narasiṁha and Krishṇa as Kāliyadamana are more popular than the peaceful *(para)* aspects like Śeshaśayī and Garuḍa-Nārāyaṇa. This was obviously due to the influence of the Gupta kings who were themselves *parama-bhāgavatas*, i.e., ardent devotees of *Vaishṇava-dharma* and took a strong fancy for the heroic *avatāras* of Vishṇu, specially Varāha and Narasiṁha to which they frequently likened their own earthly role as saviours.

Vaishṇavism could not remain isolated from other contemporary religious movements and there were mutual borrowings among the Brahmanical sects of tenets and cult-practices and conscious attempts at syncretism. A classical example of syncretism between Vaishṇavism and Śaivism is provided by an epigraphic record dated AD 567 referring to an image of Śankara-Nārāyaṇa[1] which is also called Arddhaśaurīśvara, alluding obviously to the pristine assimilation of the solar cult of Āditya Vishṇu to that of Vishṇu-Nārāyaṇa. Whatever rivalry or strife may have existed among the Brahmanical sects gradually wore off and Nepal seems to have headed towards the ideal of *pañcha-devopāsanā* perhaps sooner than India.

The earliest Vaishṇava images found in the Nepal Valley are the twin images representing Vishṇu Vikrānta, i.e., Vishṇu as Trivikrama, inscribed and dated 389 (AD 467)

[1] R. Gnoli, *Nepalese Inscriptions in Gupta Characters* (Rome 1956), Part I, p 28

in the reign of the Lichchhavi king Mānadeva. The inscription[1] on both the images is identical and refers to the construction of a Vaishṇava temple, probably one of Lakshmī, where these images were installed for the merit of the queen-mother Rājyavatī. An earlier inscription of the same king dated 386 (AD 464), engraved on a pillar standing in the courtyard of the Changu Nārāyaṇa temple, begins with an invocation to Hari residing in Dolādri and commanding constant worship,[2] alluding obviously to the fact that the Vishṇu temple at Dolādri (Changu hill) was already celebrated before the pillar was set up. Other Vaishṇava shrines mentioned in the Lichchhavi inscriptions, assignable to the seventh century, include those of Śrīdevī,[3] Narasiṁhadeva,[4] of Nārāyaṇasvāmī at Nuppunna[5] and of Jalaśayana at Bhumbhukkikā[6] as well as at Dakshiṇa Koli,[7] the last identifiable probably with Budha Nilakaṇṭha. It is not unlikely that the temple of Satyanārāyaṇa at Harigaon may also have been founded about this time.

Of the actual early Vaishṇava images found in the Valley mention has already been made of the twin images of Vishṇu Vikranta dated AD 467. Images of Bhū-varāha from Dhum Varahi (pl. 33B) and of Kāliyadamana[8] from Basantpur Palace, Kathmandu, assignable to *circa* sixth century, respectively represent the Varāha and Kṛishṇa incarnations of Vishṇu. Two independent sculptures of Garuḍa datable to *circa* seventh century are known, the one from Harigaon (pl. 38) crowns an inscribed pillar, while the other from Changu Narayana (pl. 37) now lies loose. To the same period belongs the Jalaśayana at Budha Nilkaṇṭha (pl. 29), representing Śeshaśāyī Vishṇu. Changu Nārāyaṇa is indeed a prolific site which has yielded images of Trivikrama and Vishṇu as Viśvarūpa (*circa* seventh-eighth century), two images of Garuḍa-Nārāyaṇa respectively of eighth and ninth centuries, of Girija Narasiṁha (*circa* ninth century) and of Vishṇu as Śrīdhara flanked by Lakshmī and Garuḍa (*circa* ninth-tenth century), besides numerous later images.

By the tenth century images of Vishṇu became stereotyped and generally followed the conventional norms of North India. The concept of the *chaturviṁśatimūrtis* as outlined in the Pañcharātra and the Puranic texts also received visual forms, but the plastic treatment in Nepal retained its individuality. A good number of Vaishṇava shrines built by the early Mallas prove the continued popularity of the cult which is also attested by the find of manuscripts, often illustrated, of Vaishṇava texts like the *Mahābhārata, Rāmāyaṇa, Harivaṁśa, Vishṇudharma-purāṇa* and of dramas based on the *Rāmāyaṇa* story, such as the *Mahīrāvaṇavadha* and the *Hanumāna Nāṭaka*. During the rule of the later Mallas the Kṛishṇa cult gained popularity and so did the composite images of Lakshmī-Nārāyaṇa paralleling conceptually to the Śaiva icons of Ardhanārīśvara. After the twelfth century,

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 6
[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 2
[3] *Op. cit.*, p. 48
[4] *Op. cit.*, p. 50
[5] *Op. cit.*, p. 71
[6] *Op. cit.*, p. 50
[7] *Op. cit.*, p. 81
[8] Stella Kramrisch, *The Art of Nepal* (New York 1964), fig. IV

Vaishṇavism in Nepal became deeply permeated by Tāntric forms of Śaivism and Buddhism, as is revealed by the popularity of Vaishṇava *maṇḍalas*.

ŚAIVISM

How the Rigvedic Rudra was invested with the attributes inherent in the one hundred names enumerated in the *Śatarudrīya* text of the *Śukla Yajurveda* and how he was transformed and metamorphosed as the epic-Puranic Śiva by assimilating the various cult-divinities and folk-deities is indeed an enchanting study. The horned deity represented on the well-known seal from Mohenjodaro as seated in meditation in a *yogic* pose, surrounded by animals, also appears to have been absorbed in the amalgam of the Śiva concept.[1] Though primarily charged, as a member of the Brahmanical triad, with the cosmic function of *saṁhāra* (dissolution), Śiva came to be associated by his exclusive devotees also with the functions of *sṛishṭi* (creation) and *sthiti* (preservation), besides being endowed with the attributes of *anugraha* (conferment of grace) and *tirobhāva* (power of obscuration) and was visualized in forms appropriate to these functions.

There are references to the worship of Śiva in Pāṇini's *Ashṭādhyāyī* (*circa* fourth century BC) and in Patañjali's *Mahābhāshya* (second century BC). We also get archaeological and glyptic evidence for Śiva worship in India from *circa* second century BC. It is not unlikely that the *Śiva-bhāgavatas* of Patañjali had some association with the Pāśupatas who are mentioned as one of the five principal religious and philosophical systems in the *Mahābhārata*. A teacher called Lakulīśa who was the systematizer, if not the founder of the Pāśupata sect and was subsequently deified, flourished between the second century BC and second century AD Lakulīśa had four disciples, each of whom headed a sub-sect of the Pāśupatas. The practices and outlandish behaviour of some of Pāśupatas, which had an older tradition, were frequently commented upon in the religious and literary works of the early centuries of the Christian era. There also grew up other Śaiva sects like the Kāpālikas and Kālāmukhas of a *ghora* type and the Vedānta Śaivas and the Āgamānta Śaivas of a moderate type. The Śuddha Śaivas, who considered the Āgamas to be the direct revelation of Śiva, believed in the three principles of *pati, paśu* and *pāśa* and relied on *charyā, kriyā, yoga* and *jñāna* for final deliverance. While the metaphysics of the Kāpālikas and the Kālāmukhas ran almost parallel to that of the Śuddha Śaivas, the former sects believed in the worship of the terrific forms of Śiva as Kāpāli or Bhairava, involving human sacrifice, consumption of wine and meat and even raw flesh and blood and admitted women in the esoteric rites which included sexual orgies. These unsocial and extremist cult-practices, which were in vogue during early centuries of the Christian era became progressively more virulent after the seventh century under the Tāntric influence. Now the Tāntric form of Śaivism is known to have close affinities with Tāntric Buddhism, both being obsessed by the concept of Śakti worship and visualizing numerous deities of fierce and weird aspects, some of which are strikingly alike.

[1] Sir John Marshall, *Mohenjodaro and the Indus Civilization* (London 1931), pl XII, 17, pp. 52-56. The deity is considered by the author as the prototype of Śiva-Pāśupati.

Śaivism has been the most popular religion of Nepal. Śiva has commanded worship both in the symbolic and the anthropomorphic forms. The symbolic worship in the form of *liṅga*, however, has been in greater vogue than the worship in human form and is also older, as is attested by inscriptional evidence. A *liṅga* has been found bearing a fragmentary dedicatory inscription[1] dated 388 (AD 466), referring to the *liṅga* and a *prāsāda* (evidently the temple where the *liṅga* was set up). This is followed by a number of inscribed *liṅgas*, dated in the late fifth and early sixth centuries,[2] which were named after the persons who consecrated them—a conventional practice followed in all subsequent centuries. It is not without significance that most of these early inscribed *liṅgas* (there are scores of uninscribed ones) were concentrated at Deo-Patan i.e., the area adjoining the Paśupati temple.

Scores of uninscribed *liṅgas*, resembling the inscribed and dated ones in form, material and finished workmanship, are found at Deo-Patan and hundreds of such *liṅgas* are scattered over the length and breadth of the Kathmandu Valley. These Lichchhavi *liṅgas* are normally plain and rarely of the *eka-mukha* or *chaturmukha* varieties.

As regards the Paśupati temple itself, it enshrines a *Chaturmukha-liṅga* which though Guptan in form and concept, is definitely datable to AD 1361 when the temple is recorded to have been reconstructed and the deity reinstalled, following the destruction and defilement of the old temple at the hands of Shamsuddin Ilyas in AD 1349. Traditionally, believed to be ageless, the antiquity of the original Paśupatinātha shrine may go back earlier than the beginning of the sixth century AD, which is the date of the inscription[3] found at Bhasmeśvara near the Paśupati Temple, referring to the holy *Paśupati-kshetra*. It is well to remember that the traditional form of Paśupatinātha as *Chaturmukha-liṅga* is a combination of the symbolic and the anthropomorphic forms of Śiva, which was effected in India in *circa* fifth century AD. By the beginning of the seventh century, we find Lord Paśupatinātha recognised as the guardian deity of Nepal. In almost all his inscriptions Aṁśuvarman styled himself as *Paśupati-bhaṭṭāraka-pādānugrihīta* or *Paśupati-bhaṭṭārakapādānu-dhyāta*. Subsequent kings of Nepal also paid obseisance to Lord Paśupati in similar terms and many of them from Aṁśuvarman onwards are known to have endowed the holy shrine with land and other offerings.

We have already seen that the Pāśupatas were a prominent Śaiva sect in India during the early centuries of the Christian era. The shrine of Paśupatinātha was obviously founded by the Pāśupatas who seem to have been well-established in Nepal during the Lichchhavi period and are mentioned in some Lichchhavi inscriptions.[4] The very concept of *chaturmukha-liṅga* representing the deity of the Paśupati temple, marks the fusion of the twin eternal principles of Śiva and Śakti or *purusha* and *prakriti*. The four visible faces of Tatpurusha-Mahādeva Aghora-Bhairava, Vāmadeva-Umā and Sadyojāta-Nandī are cardinally

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[1] R. Gnoli, *op. cit*., p. 7

[2] *Op. cit.*, pp. 9, 13

[3] *Abhilekha Saṁgraha*, pt. I, p. 26

[4] Gnoli, *op. cit.*, pp. 79, 95, 107

oriented, the fifth face pertaining to the higest aspect of Śiva., viz. Isāna-Sadāśiva being invisible and incomprehensible to all but the perfected initiates.[1]

As regards actual representations, we have thousands of plain *Śiva-liṅgas* spread over the valley and thick clusters thereof at and around the Paśupati temple. These are of various ages and only a handful are definitely datable, those assignable between the fifth and sixth centuries having already been noticed above. As the criteria for the evolution of the plain *liṅgas* is not precisely defined, the *liṅgas* stylistically resembling the dated ones should be of a comparable date and some may even be earlier.

As regards the *mukha-liṅgas*, which combine the symbolic with the anthropomorphic forms, some examples with one face and quite a few with four faces are known. An *ekamukha-liṅga* from the Paśupati area with a fine oval face and thick warm lower lip is attributable to *circa* seventh century. A slightly worn *chaturmukha-liṅga* of *circa* sixth century is now set up in the same area on the Bagmati bridge. Two *chaturmukha-liṅgas* from Deo-Patan, which are typical of the class, are illustrated. The specimen from the Bhuvaneśvarī temple, referrable to *circa* eleventh century, resembles the main deity of the Paśupati temple and its principal eastern face representing Tatpurusha—Mahādeva has a handsome physiognomy with meditative expression. The other specimen from Tāmreśvara (the metallic mask alone is visible covering and conforming in contours to the original stone *liṅga*) is stylistically not earlier than the twelfth century and has the four usual faces of which the north one pertaining to Vāmadeva—Umā actually represents the head of Ardhanārīśvara with the right half marked by the luxuriant curls belonging to Umā and the left half to Śiva as Vāmadeva.

The anthropomorphic forms of Śiva are also fairly popular and we get representations of Śiva in various beatific as well as terrific aspects. Generally, the terrific forms appear later than the beatific ones which show Śiva either alone or more frequently with his consort known by such appellations as Umā or Pārvatī. Śiva depicted seated with his consort and known in iconographic texts as Umā-Maheśvara, Āliṅgana-mūrti or Umāsahita-mūrti was a favourite theme in Nepal ever since *circa* fifth century. The earliest inscribed image of this theme comes from Lalitpur and is dated 495 (AD 473).[2] During the Lichchhavi period the composition is simple, showing few attendants which multiply by the ninth century to include Nandī, Skanda, maid(s) of Pārvatī, a pair of Śiva's attendant-guards, besides dancing Bhṛiṅgī and host of *Śiva-gaṇas* led by Gaṇapati. The theme of Śiva-Pārvatī enjoying domestic bliss in Kailāsa, depicted at Ellora in various contexts, is elaborated in Nepal and a significant addition made to include the descent of Gaṅgā so that the Gaṅgādhara aspect is also projected in the same figure. The Himalayan hillscape, with which the Nepal artist was so at home, is lovingly delineated as the locus of the events. After the twelfth century the popular theme of Umā-Maheśvara lost its freshness and vitality and was reduced into an iconographic cliché with Tāntric overtones often added to it.

The Ardhanārīśvara form of Śiva, combining the features and attributes of Śiva in one half and of Pārvatī in the other half, vividly represents the synthesis of the twin eternal

[1] *Ancient India*, No 2, p. 7

[2] *Ancient Nepal*, No. 4, pp. 39-44, pl. VII

principles of *purusha* and *prakriti* or Śiva and Śakti, which is already implied in the concept of the *chaturmukha-liṅga*. Images of Ardhanārīśvara are occasionally found in Nepal between the eleventh and the eighteenth centuries, the earliest known image being carved on a subsidiary stone shrine, assignable to *circa* eleventh century, in the compound of the Paśupati temple.

The syncretistic image of Hari-Hara or Śaṅkara-Nārāyaṇa also represents a similar concept combining the well-known aspects of Vishṇu and Śiva in the same image. We have epigraphic testimony for the foundation of an image of Śaṅkara-Nārāyaṇa as early as year 469 (AD 567) and find an actual icon of this deity at Deo-Patan, dating from the eighth century. Images of Hari-Hara continued in vogue till the eighteenth century.

Sculptures of Naṭarāja are less common in Nepal, the earliest example being known from the subsidiary stone shrine, assignable to *circa* eleventh century, in the compound of the Paśupati temple. A few images of Naṭarāja also come from the Sundari Chowk, Patan, and other monuments assignable to the seventeenth century.

Among the rare beatific manifestations of Śiva encountered in Nepal may be mentioned Chhatra Chaṇḍeśvara, and Ekapāda-Trimūrti. Chhatra Chaṇḍeśvara, who is mentioned in a sixth century Lichchhavi inscription, is represented *ūrdhva-meḍhra,* three-eyed and four-armed, carrying *akshamālā, triśūla, kamala* and *kamaṇḍalu* and is recognised by an umbrella placed over his head. Whereas Chaṇḍeśa or Chaṇḍeśvara of the south Indian tradition is a devotee exalted as a guardian of Śiva's establishment, in Nepal Chaṇḍeśvara is a form of Śiva himself as is already stated in the inscription cited and confirmed by the iconographic attributes. Interesting images of Ekapāda Trimūrti from Nepal of *circa* eighteenth century represent Śiva combining the features of Ekapāda and Ardhanārīśvara with adoring Brahmā and Vishṇu issuing respectively from the right and left sides of the waist of the principal figure, who is shown as four-armed. There is also a two-armed and three-eyed Śaiva deity from Aryaghat near the Paśupati temple who is identified by some scholars as Virūpāksha and assignable stylistically to *circa* fifth century. Virūpāksha is a form of Śiva as well as one of the Eleven Rudras according to some iconographic texts like the *Viśvakarmaśilpaprakāśa* and the *Rūpamaṇḍana.*

The worship of Śiva in his terrific form as Bhairava comes next in popularity in Nepal to the worship of *Śiva-liṅga.* Śiva was known in his terrific aspect as the god par excellence of cosmic destruction *(saṁhāra)* and death and assumed fierce forms, holding a variety of lethal weapons whenever he fought the demons. He was also shown as nude and carrying a *kapāla* or a corpse when he expiated for the sins of chopping off the fifth head of Brahmā and killing Vishvaksena. Śiva also took the forms of Bhairavas to preside as guardian deities over the *Śakti-pīṭhas* which sprang up at the spots where fell the severed limbs of Satī. Thus the Indian iconographic texts already knew of a fair number of Bhairavas, which according to one reckoning rose to sixty-four. Under the impact of Tāntrism there was an amazing proliferation in the number of Bhairava forms in Nepal, where they are normally depicted in the militant pose known as *ālīḍha* or *pratyālīḍha.* They may have two, four, eight, or ten arms and hold sword and shield, bow and arrow, noose, mace, hammer, spear, trident, bell, skull-cup and *tarjanī-mudrā,* etc. in various combinations. They are often shown as

nude or draped in tiger skin and in most cases stand on prostrate human figures and have a terrific mien with raised curls and rolling eyes and wear snake-ornaments and *muṇḍa-mālā*. Bhairava figures were set up in large numbers during the Malla period as guardians or protective deities of shrines, villages and settlements.

An image of three-headed, three-legged and three-handed Śiva as Jvarahareśvara, combining both terrific and beatific aspects, stands facing the south gate of the sanctum of the Paśupati temple. All the heads are terrific and the main pair of legs is posed in *ālīḍhāsana*, while the additional central leg is folded in *padmāsana*. The three hands hold *akshamālā*, *abhaya* and *kamaṇḍalu*. The image, assignable to *circa* thirteenth century, has an obvious Tantric stamp.

Independent images of Śiva's family members, viz. Pārvatī, Kumāra and Gaṇeśa are also popular. While Pārvatī is invariably represented in the beatific form, Kumāra and Gaṇeśa are depicted both in the beatific and terrific aspects. Originally both Kumāra and Gaṇeśa were malevolent folk-deities belonging to the class of *yaksha* and *piśācha* and had an obscure and lowly origin. Skanda or Kumāra was a *bāla-graha*, i.e., killer of children and Gaṇeśa caused obstacles and was called Vighna. It was only subsequently that they were elevated and drafted in Śiva's family as his sons and assumed the roles of benevolent deities. Skanda became a protector not only of the human beings but also of the gods and a personification of heroic qualities and good looks. Similarly Gaṇeśa became popular with the Buddhists as well as the Hindus as a god of good auspices, assuring success in all ventures and activities and was invariably represented in Nepal as a guardian of both Hindu and Buddhist shrines and establishments. As regards their sculptural depiction in Nepal they were conceived invariably in the beatific aspects prior to the twelfth century and thereafter they were frequently represented in terrific forms and occasionally even as blood-sucking deities under Tāntric influence.

During the later Malla period Nandī was also anthropomorphised and depicted as a drummer often with a fierce mien to form a pair with Bhṛiṅgī, the two being inseparables in the popular mind.

RELIGIOUS TOLERATION

Religious strife and intolerance have been unknown in the history of Nepal and are alien to her national character. Although the rulers subscribed to the Brahmanical faith, they liberally patronised Buddhism and revered the Buddhist deities with the same zeal and devotion that they showed to the Brahmanical divinities. King Aṁśuvarman, who proudly styled himself as an ardent devotee of Lord Paśupati, endowed the prominent Buddhist, Śaiva and Vaishṇava establishments of his time (early seventh century) without any discrimination, the scale of endowment being uniform for the Paśupati shrine, the temple of Dolāśikharanārāyaṇa (Changu Nārāyaṅa) and four Buddhist *vihāras*. The treaties and agreements signed between the ruling chiefs of the Malla period invoked the most

important Buddhist as well as Hindu deities of Nepal including Karuṇāmaya and Machhendranātha, Paśupatinātha, and Garuḍa-Nārāyaṇa of Changu Nārāyaṇa, Talejū and Guhyeśvarī, Harasiddhi and Vajrayoginī. These deities, besides a few others, were not the exclusive preserve of any particular sect but were the national deities of Nepal and commanded universal homage from all inhabitants of the land, irrespective of caste and creed. Thus on a particular day in a year Lord Paśupati is worshipped as Buddha himself, while goddess Tulajā, popularly known as Talejū is adored as Bhavānī by the Hindus and as Ugratārā by the Buddhists. Similarly Matsyendranātha (commonly styled Machhendranātha) is equally sacred to the Hindus and the Buddhists who regard him as Lokeśvara. Likewise, Mahākāla and Vajrayoginī are both Śaiva and Buddhist deities, while Śītalā (locally known as Azimā) who is installed in a shrine at Svayambhūnātha is adored by the Buddhists as goddess Hārītī. A rare instance of cult-syncretism is provided by Budha Nilakaṇṭha, representing Vishṇu as Śeshaśāyī who is simultaneously conceived as Nīlkaṇṭha Śiva by the Śaivas and as Lokeśvara by the Buddhists. It will thus be seen that religious catholocity and concord have been the way of life in Nepal ever since the time of Aṁśuvarman (seventh century). All her social and religious institutions are marked by an amazing spirit of sectarian amity and harmony and this was promoted by the Tāntric movement which was most eclectic in its outlook.

Buddhism in Nepal under the Tāntric dispensation lost its sectarian exclusiveness and accepted the caste system and the ritualistic bias of Brahmanism. From the eleventh century onwards hundreds of Buddhist deities were conceived and fashioned under the influence of Tantrayāna and Vajrayāna sects, which bore a marked impact of Tantric Śaivism. The Tāntric forms of Buddhism and Śaivism flourished in the valley simultaneously and their interfusion led to complex iconographical forms revealing Buddhist deities with Brahmanical features and Brahmanical deities with Buddhist traits, the latter exemplified by a number of Śaiva and Vaishṇava deities holding among other weapons *vajra* and *vajra-ghaṇṭā* which are usually associated with the Vajrayāna deities. The iconographical synthesis between the Tāntric forms of Buddhism and Brahmanism is graphically illustrated by some figures of Kāla and Kālī in the Sundarī Chowk, Patan, depicting on their pedestal a frieze showing a repeat pattern of the *stūpa* alternating with the *Śiva-liṅga*.

Aggressive Buddhist deities trampling on Brahmanical gods and goddesses are seldom depicted in Nepal, since they are incompatible with the spirit of amity and concord subsisting between the two sects in the valley. This is illustrated by the image of the Buddhist deity Vighnāntaka where Gaṇeśa instead of being trampled upon appears as a docile pupil at the feet of the deity, thus softening the aggressive tone of the theme. Another deity represented in the Valley is Hari-Hari-Hari-Vāhana Lokeśvara, which illustrates more the poetic pun on the word *Hari* than the spirit of militant Buddhism. Buddhist deities such as Vajrahuṅkāra trampling on Śiva or Vajrajvālānalārka trampling on Vishṇu and Lakshmī, Trailokyavijaya as trampling on Śiva and Pārvatī could never be popular in Nepal since these deities militated against the prevailing spirit of reconciliation.

CHARACTERISTICS OF NEPALESE ART

The art of Nepal, like that of India, is deeply religious. Gods and goddesses and their myths and legends together with the sacred symbols and imagery form the main theme of this art. The Nepalese artist, however, was not oblivious of nature and the life around, but these were not given prominence and were normally relegated as background decoration and were of importance in so far as they subserved the life religious. The Nepalese artists always had a keen sense for the spectacular and accordingly the sacred legends capable of dramatic representation specially caught their imagination. Even for the simpler themes of gods and goddesses which are by their very nature bound by hieratic conventions and prescriptions they chose unusual twists and angles which imparted them gripping and arresting appearance.

From *circa* first century AD Nepal was open to art influences from India. Several schools of Indian art such as the early Central Indian and Mathura; the classical schools of Magadha, Sarnath and Central India; the Vakataka, early Kalachuri-Chalukyan and Rashtrakuta schools of the Deccan; and the Late Gupta, Pāla and Sena schools of eastern India had impact on the art creations of Nepal. Nepal was mostly at the receiving end of the art influences from India and yet Nepal did not turn into a regional school of Indian art but retained her uniqueness and individual character. The Nepalese artists had the genius to pick and choose such elements of Indian art as interested them and assimilated the borrowed elements and transformed them into something novel by their magic touch. Various schools of Indian art enriched and left their impress on the Nepalese art. And as has been aptly put by Stella Kramrisch "The complexity of the form of sculpture in Nepal results from two factors. Nepal is on the receiving end of more than one tradition. Full-fledged they enter the country and are taken up by a living practice of which they become an integral part. The impact or heritage of one such style may continue while subsequently another style, from a different regional centre in India is being absorbed and finally gains ascendancy. These impacts from outside are the one factor in the fabric of Nepal sculpture. The other is the local tradition, the ineluctable mode of reception as part of the creativeness of the Newar sculptor. Fed by Indian sources and sustained by its own vitality the stream of the Newar tradition carries on a multiple heritage and blends its components. Influences once received persist and while they are being assimilated this new amalgam is ready to absorb one more influence. This appears to have happened in a particularly striking way between the eighth and twelfth century."[1]

That the process of transformation of Indian elements in the art of Nepal starts as early as *circa* first century AD is indicated by the torso of a *Yaksha*-Bodhisattva,[2] which is the earliest sculpture hitherto found in Nepal, combining the features of the early Indian *Yaksha* and the Mathura Buddha-Bodhisattva types. The sculpture is fully carved in the round, though it is more sensitively modelled in the front than at the back. The *samabhaṅga*

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[1] *Oriental Art*, Vol. X, No. 4, 1964, pp 230-31

[2] *Ancient Nepal*, No. 4, pp. 37-39, pl. V

stance of the figure and the treatment of the *ekāṁsika uttarīya,* partly gathered in the clenched left hand held akimbo, are identical with the early Buddha-Bodhisattva images of the Mathura school. The modelling of the back, however, follows the earlier tradition of the *Yaksha* figures and the manner of the rendering of the buttocks, the *kachchha* of the *dhotī* and the looped and tassellated ends of the *kaṇṭha-hāra* has close affinities with the figure of Maṇibhadra *Yaksha* from Pawayas.[1] The sculpture is sylistically assignable to *circa* first century AD and attests the direct contacts of Nepal with the earlier central Indian and Mathura schools.

The next sculptures found in Nepal are attributable to the fourth-fifth centuries. While the twin pieces of Trivikrama Vishṇu are dated 389 (AD 467), there are some sculptures, which are referable to the earlier century. The most notable of these is the so-called sculpture of a king from Mrigasthali,[2] executed in frontal relief. It represents a heroic and earth-bound figure, bursting with energy and standing in *samabhaṅga,* with legs apart and retracted elbows. The broad shoulders, heaving chest and the muscular arms pulsate with dynamic vitality and swell with the ebb and flow of the inner breath. The two hands of the figure, the left one clenched and the right one in the *varada-mudrā* are kept on the lateral loops of the shawl. The enigmatic figure inspired by the Kushāṇa-Gupta art of India and having a nimbate and diademmed round face of Nepalese physiognomy, may well represent a *Yaksha* or a tutelary deity.

Among sculptures of the fifth century, the standing Buddha from Chabel[3] is the earliest image of Buddha hitherto found in the Valley. Sculptured in the classical Gupta style of Sarnath, this image represents the Buddha standing in an elegant *ābhaṅga,* with the two hands broken off. The Master is draped in two pieces of cloth, both so diaphanous as to fully reveal the modelling of the graceful body in all subtle nuances. The smooth and luminous plasticity of the figure, the technique of representing the transparent drapery revealing the *vastikosha* (membrum virile), the knee-caps and the upper and lower ends of the clothes and the rendering of the folds of the upper garment below the neck have striking affinity with the standing Buddha figures from Sarnath.[4] The face of the figure, however, follows the Mathura convention and resembles that of the seated image of the Buddha, dated year 64 of Trikamala from Bodhgaya[5] save in the treatment of the eyes and eyebrows. On our figure the eyes are open and extrovert and the eye-brows are ridged which is a Nepalese feature.

The next batch of three cognate images of the Buddha from Kathmandu, assignable to *circa* seventh century stand alike in a graceful *ābhaṅga* with the right hand stretched in the *varada-mudrā* and the left hand raised shoulder high holding the gathered ends of the *saṁghāṭī.* Two of them are represented in two out of the four niches of the prismatic *chaitya* at Dhvaka Baha, which bears an inscription assignable to *circa* seventh century.

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[1] *Saga of Indian Sculpture* (Bhartiya Vidya Bhawan, Bombay 1957), pl. 4(b)

[2] Stella Kramrisch, *op. cit.,* fig. 1

[3] Photograph from Nepal Deptt. of Archaeology

[4] D. G. A S.I. Photograph 189/63

[5] S. K. Saraswati. *A Survey of Indian Sculpture* (Calcutta 1957), p. 131. pl. XXI. 92

The faces of both are alike and lack the luminosity of the Indian Gupta type but in the treatment of the drapery one faithfully follows the Mathura and the other the Sarnath Gupta convention of the Buddha figures. The third sculpture of the Buddha from Ramshah Path[1] also conforms to the Sarnath mode in the treatment of the drapery as well as the rendering of the body type and the face with half-closed eyes in meditative expression. Henceforth, the Gupta Buddha from Sarnath became the model for almost all subsequent standing figures of the Buddha in Nepal.

We have just seen how Nepal felt the impulse of the refined Gupta school of north India. In an image of Śītalā at Patan, attributable to the sixth century, the influence of the Gupta styles of eastern and central India, particularly Pawaya, is clearly discernible. We also find an echo of the Gupta-Vākāṭaka and early Chalukyan idioms in the roughly contemporary monumental *Yaksha*—like figure of Chakra-purusha seated in *pralambapādāsana* from Aryaghat and more particularly in a later group of narrative reliefs from Nagaltol, Kathesimbu and Kankesvari, in Kathmandu. These reliefs in the setting of the Himalayan landscape depict scenes of worship, sylvan sports, dance and penance, etc. which have been plausibly identified by N. R. Banerjee with the Śaiva myths as narrated in the *Kumārasambhavam*.[2] The modelling of these figures, wearing luxuriant curls and few ornaments, is suave and sensitive and the narrative content is marked by rich sensuousness and emotional vivacity. The gay abandon of the couple sporting with the dancing peacock, the surprise encounter of the lady with the young lad in a peculiar dress, the serene sylvan setting of the hills, where Pārvatī is engaged in penance, attended by two devoted maids, sparingly dressed like her, the teacher instructing the fair pupil in the dance and the scene of worship with flowers by the couple with the nude child in between have been depicted with zest and telling sincerity. The modelling of the child in the last-mentioned relief is indeed strikingly akin to that of child Kṛishṇa subjugating the serpent Kāliya from the Basantpur Palace, Kathmandu. The latter sculpture, which is indeed a masterpiece of Nepalese art, is informed by elemental power and dynamic resilience of movement, which are characteristics of the early Chalukyan art of the Deccan.

The monumental quality and powerful dynamism of the Chalukyan and Rāshṭrakūṭa arts are best echoed by the images of Vishṇu as Trivikrama from Lajimpat and Changu Narayana and by the fine series of early Vaishnava sculptures from the latter site, particularly Vishṇu as Viśvarūpa and Garuḍa Nārāyaṇa (pls. 27 and 19). The heritage of the Rāshṭrakūṭa art which added lyricism is taken up by the early series of the bronze and stone sculptures of Devī[3] and is continued in the elegant sculptures of Umā-Maheśvara (pls. 47-48).

The early Bodhisattva type of Nepal owed much to the contemporary arts of the Deccan and Eastern India. To quote Stella Kramrisch[4] many Indian styles "became blended or compacted and reshaped by the hand of the Newar sculptor who not only

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[1] Photograph from Nepal Deptt. of Archaeology
[2] N. R. Banerjee, *Nepalese Art* (Kathmandu 1966), pls XV-XVI
[3] Stella Kramrisch, *op cit*, fig. 2-4
[4] *Oriental Art*, X, No. 4, 1964, p. 233

imparted his own creative rhythm to his work but also related it to the life and the people around him. He reformed or else transformed or replaced the Indian faces of gods by Nepalese countenances. This process took its course along with a perpetual if unobstrusive osmosis or infiltration of contemporary Indian form until, from the tenth century, a new and powerful impact of the Eastern Indian school made itself felt and, from the end of the twelfth century gained ascendancy over the compounded creative magma of the then current tradition.

It is well known that Nepal provided refuge to numerous Buddhist scholars and artists from eastern India in the wake of the Muslim invasions and the art practices in Nepal were considerably influenced by them. A direct impact on the Nepal art was that of the Sena school or rather its derivatives which had its Nepalese centre at Simraongarh situated in the Nepal Tarai. But the Sena impact did not last long and its was the Pāla art of the eleventh century which had the deepest and most abiding influence on Nepal. The Newar artist groomed his presentation and added dainty elegance to the sure foundation of the sensuous and suave modelling derived from the Pāla art. He had devised his own techniques and devices of which counterbalancing the figure and the drapery and poising the composition were important. He presented his subjects from unusual angles and imparted them amazing lightness and movement. These qualities are present in the sculptures as well as the bronzes of which Nepal has been an important centre ever since the seventh century AD. It may be noted that the inlaying and gem-setting of the bronzes which were known to a certain extent in India were carried to perfection by the Newar artists who used them to maximum advantage.

From the thirteenth century Nepal art was characterized by profuse ornamentation which was carried to an extreme after the fifteenth century. The Malla art-products of Nepal of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, with their over-ornate and flamboyant appearance are in the full grip of the recoco.

BRAHAMANICAL IMAGES

VAISHṆAVA IMAGES

Vishṇu was conceived and worshipped in Nepal, as in India under three main forms or aspects, viz. *para* or the highest, the *vyūha* or the emanatory and the *vibhava* or the incarnatory. It is, however, noteworthy that between the fifth and eighth centuries when we first encounter the Vaishṇava images in Nepal, the heroic incarnatory forms, capable of dramatic representation, viz. Trivikrama, Varāha, Narasiṁha and Kṛishṇa as Kāliya-damana are more popular than the peaceful *(para)* aspects like Śeshaśāyī and Garuḍa-Nārāyaṇa.

The *para* aspect of Vishṇu is best represented by Garuḍāsana form of Vishṇu locally known as Garuḍa-Nārāyaṇa. The earliest and the finest image of the type assignable to *circa* eighth century comes from Changu Narayana with Lord Vishṇu gracefully seated on his mount Garuḍa whose plumes form a *prabhāvalī* behind the god. The god is four-armed

carrying fruit in the place of lotus, *chakra, gadā* and *śaṅkha.* He wears *kirīṭa-mukuṭa* adorned by three circular crests of which the central one is larger and shows a design of *kīrttimukha.* He also wears *makara-kuṇḍalas,* necklace of two strands of pearls with central bead-pendants, *yajñopavīta,* wristlets, scarf worn as an *udarabandha,* and a lower garment fastened by a belt of chord. The loop of the scarf falling across the thighs resembles a cable. The god has an oval face with thick warm lips. The image is remarkable for its expressive quality and dignified bearing which recall to mind the sculptures from Ellora and Elephanta. Garuḍa, whose forepart is human and hind part that of a bird, is represented in the act of flight, both arms out-stretched and the wings fully spread out, resembling the gorgeous plumes of a dancing peacock. The figure of Garuḍa is notable for its powerful chest and the expression of extraordinary dignity and devotion on the face, which is of a broad set with curly hair, rolling eyes and knit eye-brows.

The same theme is repeated in another image from Changu Narayana, assignable to *circa* ninth century (pl. 20A). Garuda here is seen seated on rocks. Although it is identical with the previous image iconographically, it lacks the power, dignity and terse modelling of the previous image.

The theme is continued in an eleventh century image from Deo-Patan (pl. 21B), though the god there is seated in *padmāsana* on a lotus pedestal which in its turn is being supported by the same type of flying Garuḍa. The plumage of Garuḍa, however, has lost its realism and is treated as scroll work, fringed by a border of flames, forming the *prabhāvalī.* Garuḍa here is represented on a pedestal which is carved with lotus scrolls. Vishṇu shows two flanking female attendants, each standing in *tribhaṅga* on an independent lotus pedestal, the flanking goddess on the proper right carrying *abhaya* and lotus stalk and that on the proper left holding a large lotus blossom with both her hands. This image follows the early artistic convention of representing the god flanked by two female attendants.

We may notice two examples of the same theme belonging to *circa* sixteenth century. The example from the Kumbheśvara Temple, Patan (pl. 20B) represents the theme in a circular stele showing the god seated in *padmāsana* on a lotus pedestal with flying Garuḍa represented as the mount. The god is flanked on each side by a female attendant, representing Bhūdevī and Śrīdevī, each standing on an independent lotus stalk. The sculpture lacks freshness and vitality. The other example from the Archaeological Garden, Patan is even cruder but is interesting in that Vishṇu is shown riding on the shoulders of Garuḍa and carries his attributes in a different order viz. *chakra, padma, gadā* and *śaṅkha.*

Lastly we may also notice an example of Vishṇu standing on flying Garuḍa from Patan, assignable to *circa* seventeenth century. Vishṇu here stands in *samabhaṅga* and carries a different arrangement of attributes, viz. *śaṅkha, padma, gadā* and *chakra.*

STANDING IMAGES OF VISHṆU

The standing form of Vishṇu in the *para* aspect was most popular in Nepal since we get hundreds of images of this type. The earliest such images show Vishṇu standing in

samabhaṅga flanked by Lakshmī on proper right and Garuḍa on proper left, each standing on an independent pedestal, that of Vishṇu being invariably higher. In many cases they stand on three lotus pedestals emanating from the same stalk. Standing Vishṇu is mostly represented in the form of Śrīdhara carrying *varada*-cum-*padma, chakra, gadā* and *śaṅkha.* In early examples, the god wear *kirīṭa-mukuṭa* decorated with three *chakra*-shaped crests, the central one being larger and inset with a *kīrttimukha.* The figure also wears *ratna-kuṇḍalas,* torque of two strands of pearls with a central clasp, *ananta*-shaped armlets, wristlets, *yajño-pavīta, uttarīya* treated as an *udara-bandha* with side knots, laterally flaring ends and a central pendant loop and a lower garment secured by a jewelled belt. The pleats of the lower garment are schematically arranged between the legs in a zigzag fashion. The *yajñopavīta* of Vishṇu hangs from the left shoulder forming a loop over the pleats of *uttarīya,* passes below the *uttarīya* and is continued down to the right knee. The fluttering sash-ends of the *uttarīya* meet those of Lakshmī's garment on the proper right and the cape ends of Garuḍa on the left. Three examples of this theme appear to be alike. The example from Changu Narayana (pl. 25A) shows Vishṇu standing on a rectangular pedestal marked by lotus scrolls issuing from a *pūrṇaghaṭa,* while Lakshmī stands on a lotus pedestal to indicate that she is *kamalāsanā* and Garuḍa stands on a circular rocky pedestal of two tiers. There are two examples of the same theme from Kathmandu which are now in the National Museum. One of them shows a similar arrangement of pedestals, though the rock-pedestal of Garuḍa has been left unfinished while in the other case the figures stand on lotus pedestals. In the latter case the luxurious treatment of drapery also has been avoided and the sash-ends of the shawl of Vishṇu do not meet those of Lakshmī and the cape of Garuḍa, while the loin cloth of Vishṇu is of the *sakachchha* variety without any central pleat. While the previous two images are datable to *circa* ninth century, the last one (pl. 23) may be assigned to *circa* tenth century.

There is a third image under worship in the open area at Naxal, which is similar to the image from Changu Narayana. This style appears to have been continued for at least three centuries as is indicated by a tenth-eleventh century specimen preserved in the Archaeological Garden at Patan. A degenerate version of the same theme is seen in a niche of the Kumbheśvara Tank, Patan which may date from *circa* fourteenth century. The image is much mutilated and Vishṇu has lost the upper two hands with the attributes. The faces of the figures are completely of the Nepalese cast. This theme survived until the fifteenth century as is indicated by an inscribed sculpture, dated NS 537 (AD 1416) now preserved in the Archaeological Garden, Patan. Iconographically it continues the same theme but the sculptural style and modelling are typical of the Later Malla period. The lower right hand of Vishṇu here clearly holds a lotus stalk. The figures of Lakshmī and Garuḍa are thick set and stumpy and a Śiva-*liṅga* is depicted above the halo of Vishṇu to indicate the predominance of Śaivism.

The same theme is repeated on the four sides of a circular column which has been taken by some scholars to be a Śiva-*liṅga.* Iconographically it represents the same subject but stylistically it is degenerate and may date from *circa* thirteenth century.

JALAŚAYANA VISHṆU

In comparison to the standing *(sthānaka)* and seated *(āsana)* varieties, the reclining *(śayana)* type of Vishṇu image is extremely rare. Two sculptures of this theme are well known, one from Budha Nilakantha of *circa* seventh century AD and the other from Balaju which is of later date. The image at Budha Nilakantha is enshrined in a square tank fed by natural fountains and represents a colossal figure of four-armed Vishṇu reclining on Ādiśesha. His lower right hand held in the *varada* carries a circular fruit. The remaining hands carry *chakra* represented as a wheel, *gadā* and *śaṅkha.* He lies on the coils of the Primordial serpent whose hoods numbering eleven provide a canopy over his head. He wears *kirīṭa-mukuṭa, ratna-kuṇḍalas, ananta*-shaped armlets, wristlets, torque, *uttarīya* treated as on *udara-bandha* with side knots and two jewelled loops and lower garment fastened by a jewelled belt. Scales are represented all over the coils of the serpent. This monumental image, characterised by elemental power and heroic proportions shares the modelling and features of the early images of Vishṇu from Changu Narayana. The convolutions of the *nāgas* are comparable with those of the Kāliyadamana image from the Basantpur Palace, Kathmandu and the lower part of the Vishṇu Viśvarūpa from Changu Narayana.

The later image from Balaju is smaller in comparison though still colossal and differs from the Budha Nilakantha in carrying divergent attributes in the two upper hands. While the Budha Nilakantha represents the familiar Śrīdhara form of Vishṇu, the Balaju image carries *akshamālā* in the upper left hand and flask in the upper right hand, representing Vishṇu as reclining in *yoga-nidrā.*

INCARNATIONS OF VISHṆU

Of the Daśāvatāras of Vishṇu early sculptural representations are available only of Varāha, Vāmana or Trivikrama, Narasiṁha and Kṛishṇa. Representations of the remaining Avatāras or of the full complement of the Daśāvatāras are not earlier than the Later Malla period.

The Varāha form is represented by the powerful sculpture of the god locally called Dhum-Varāha at Kathmandu assignable to *circa* sixth century. The god is represented as two-armed standing in *pratyālīḍhāsana* with a boar's head and a human body. His right foot is being supported in adoration by the great serpent. The god has placed his right hand on his waist indicative of his strong determination and holds a *śaṅkha* in his left hand. He is caressing with his snout the petite delicate figure of Prithvī who has been supported on his powerful left arm. Although the figure is not as colossal as the famous Udayagiri Varāha, it is equally powerful and has bulky volume and proportion imbued with dynamic energy (pl. 33B).

The Kṛishṇāvatāra represented by the image of Kṛishṇa subjugating Kāliya from the Basantpur Palace, Kathmandu is roughly contemporaneous with the above and shows the prodigious child-god trampling on the head and shoulder of the powerful serpent who is writhing in helpless indignation. The lithe movement of Kṛishṇa and the massive proportions of the serpent and his convolutions are remarkable.

The Trivikrama form of Vishṇu, incorporating the Vāmana incarnation, caught the special fancy of the Nepalese artist and is represented by four images which are described below:—

The image from Lajimpat labelled as *Vishṇu Vikrāntamūrti,* dated in year 389 (AD 467) represents eight-armed Vishṇu as Trivikrama, dynamically striding the universe in three paces. The left leg of the god is flung up to the level of his forehead to span the heavens *(svargaloka)* and is violently stretched in one ascending oblique line with his right leg, planted in the *pātāla-loka* (nether world). His right foot, which Namuchi, an associate of Bali, is trying in vain to dislodge, is caressingly supported on the palms of Ādiśesha and his consort. Beneath the outstretched left leg of the god is represented Vishṇu disguised as a two-armed puny *vaṭuka* (Vāmana) receiving the gift of the three paces of land which he had asked of king Bali, who, bent with devotion, is pouring water from the gold pitcher held in his hands to confirm the gift. Behind Bali stands his delicate petite queen Vindhyāvalī with hands folded, followed by two attendants of the sacrificial horse, one standing and the other seated, both holding their respective right hands in the *stuti-mudrā.* The seated attendant carries a sword in the left hand. Behind the standing attendant is represented in relief the sacrificial horse with the *yūpa* (sacrificial post) depicted in the background. The left foot of Trivikrama, lifted head high, is in contact with the terrific face of Rāhu or Brahmāṇḍa. Beneath this foot is shown the figure of Jāmbavān (?) cutting somersaults while playing on a drum held in his hands. The main right hand of Trivikrama is held in *kaṭi,* the remaining right hands hold *gadā, chakra* and the *patākā-mudrā.* The main left hand carries bow (mutilated), while the remaining left hands carry shield, *śaṅkha* and the *tarjanī-mudrā.* The god wears *kirīṭa-mukuṭa* widening towards the top, ear-pendants, torque, *udara-bandha* with its conspicuous knot and pleated ends fluttering down on the right side, *vanamālā* and a lower garment fastened by a belt. On the right flank of the god is represented the slender figure of two-armed Lakshmī carrying lotus stalk and scarf and floating in the air to approach her Lord. She is followed by Garuḍa who is depicted as a winged human figure, with hands in *añjali,* flying towards his Lord. Above Garuḍa is shown a flying *vidyādhara* with hands folded. The image is worn out and defaced and carries a two line inscription in the Gupta script on the pedestal.

The figures of Lakshmī and Vindhyāvalī are slender and recall the Pallava female forms in their delicate and sensitive modelling. In contrast to these is the powerful monumental figure of Trivikrama imbued with elemental energy and dynamism which are vividly portrayed by the dramatic stance of the god and heightened by the sweep of the god's *vanamālā.* the fluttering knot and pleats of his scarf, the helpless attitude of Namuchi clinging to his right foot, the sudden twist of the head and the snake-hoods of Ādiśesha, the floating lotus pedestal of Lakshmī who is thrown off in the air, the vigorous flight of Garuḍa and the violent somersault of Jāmbavān (?).

Although the principal elements of the story are already present in the Trivikrama relief from Pawaya of the Gupta period and on the more elaborate rock-cut sculptures at Badami (sixth century) and Mahabalipuram (seventh century), the monumental energy and the dramatic vigour of the Nepal image anticipate the art of Elephanta and Ellora.

Its stance and tense vigour are strongly reminiscent of the sculpture of Tripurāntaka (DGA Photo No. 804 of 1955) from the corridor of the Kailāsa at Ellora.

Such dynamism is not found in the Indian art of the fifth-sixth centuries and even the Rāshṭrakūṭa art of India has not produced a more powerful image of Trivikrama.

The image of Vishṇu Vikrāntamūrti found on the confluence of the Tilganga and the Bagmati (pl. 14) appears to be a poor copy of the image from Lajimpat, though it looks relatively fresh and shows the inscription on the pedestal in excellent preservation. It is obviously the handiwork of an inferior artist and lacks the power and dynamism of the Lajimpat figure. Its main figure has no strength and even the modelling particularly of the arms is poor. The way king Bali is shown pouring water from the golden pitcher is far from convincing. The figure of queen following the king also lacks delicacy. The head of flying Garuḍa is disproportionately large and most of the subsidiary figures lack animation and coordination.

Vishṇu as Trivikrama from Changu Narayana is represented striding the three worlds with his right foot firmly planted on an ornate pedestal on the ground and the left leg flung up to heavens in a straight line with the right leg. The right foot of the god supported by worshipful Ādiśesha and adored by a female figure probably Bhū-devī represented half emerging from the *pātāla* with an offering of basketful of flowers, is being vainly dislodged by Namuchi, an associate of king Bali, wearing a head-dress representing *jaṭā-mukuṭa, kuṇḍalas* and a heavy torque made of three strands of pearls. His left foot is also being supported in supplication by Rāhu, whose bust is shown with a grotesque face and dishevelled hair and wearing *kuṇḍalas* of two types, besides a torque. The god is eight-armed. The lowest pair of hands is broken. Of the second or the main pair, the right one is stretched out in the *patākā* pose, while the left one is held in the *tarjanī-mudrā*. The third pair carries a sword and *gadā,* while the uppermost upraised pair of hands carries *chakra* and shield. The god wears *kirīṭa-mukuṭa,* squarish *ratna-kuṇḍalas, kaṇṭhī* of three strands of pearls, *yajñopavīta* of pearls, jewelled armlets, wristlets, *udara-bandha* with a looped knot on the left side and fluttering sash-ends on the right and a lower garment with a brocade border reaching below the knees. Beneath the legs of the god is represented his two-armed dwarf form (Vāmana) as a young *brahmachārin* wearing only a deer-skin which passes below his right arm and reaches up to the knees. He is shown accepting an offering made from a large bowl held in the left hand of king Bali, who stoops in humility and also offers water from a golden jug held in his right hand to confirm the gift asked for by the wily dwarf. King Bali, who is very modestly dressed as a *yajamāna* in a lower garment and a scarf *(uttarīya)* without any jewellery and crown, is followed by his queen represented standing in a graceful *tribhaṅga.* On her left stands the Aśvamedha horse, below which is seated a guard wearing turban resembling *jaṭā-mukuṭa* and carrying what looks like a bow and a mutilated sheaf of arrows. The front feet of the horse whose head is represented turning back gracefully are placed on a sacrificial pedestal. Behind the horse peep out the heads of two soldiers with hair-dress resembling *jaṭā-bhāra;* one of them is shown as wielding a sword and the other holding a *gadā.* Above them is represented a boyish figure hurled down from heaven by the thrust of the god's left foot. To his left is depicted Jāmbavān

flying with hands in *añjali.* On the corresponding right side appears the flying suave figure of winged Garuḍa in full human form with hands in *añjali.* To the right of Garuḍa stands on a full-blown lotus in graceful *tribhaṅga* Lakshmī carrying a long winding lotus stalk and scarf. Above the oval halo of the god and on both flanks of it are represented clouds, with the orbs of the sun and the moon of equal dimensions, flanked on each side by a flying *vidyādhara* carrying a garland. The pedestal of this image shows geometrically treated floral carvings, done in low relief. This image is made of greenish grey stone and appears to date from *circa* eighth century. The figures of Lakshmī and Vindhyāvalī are very sensitively modelled and both wear a net type of head-dress with a fillet (adding a triangular diadem in the case of Lakshmī), *patra-kuṇḍalas,* torque of one strand of pearls *(ekāvalī)* with a cylindrical bead-pendant, armlets, bangles and anklets, besides an *uttarīya* (scarf) and lower garment secured by a jewelled *mekhalā* of three strands with a central clasp.

This figure repeats the theme of the Lajimpat image with difference of details and is much better preserved. It not only maintains the classical quality of the Lajimpat image but carries forward its vitality and dynamism to a more dignified pitch, with a touter modelling. Technically, it is better finished with a perforation in the central part of the stele to permit three-dimensional treatment of the arms of Trivikrama. It is worth noting that Rāhu is represented here as adoring the uplifted left foot of the god and flying Jāmbavān is clearly depicted below Rāhu, while the horse in the Lajimpat image is shown with a tilted agitated head, participating in the drama being enacted.

Sikha Narayan has also yielded an image of eight-armed Vishṇu as Trivikrama (pl. 16). The right foot of Vishṇu rests on a lotus seat, upheld by Śeshanāga, while Namuchi, an associate of king Bali, tries in vain to dislodge the foot. The left foot of the god is flung up neck high. His main right hand is stretched out in the *daṇḍa-hasta* pose while his main left hand is held in the *tarjanī-mudrā.* The remaining right hands carry fruit *(varada),* sword and *chakra.* The remaining left hands carry *gadā, śaṅkha* and *vajra.* The occurrence of *vajra* is significant showing Tāntric Buddhist influence. On the proper right flank stands the figure of two-armed Lakshmī on lotus-seat carrying fruit *(varada)* and lotus flower with a long stalk. On her right stands winged Garuḍa in human form with hands in *añjali.* Below Lakshmī is Ādiśesha in human form and below Garuḍa is a female figure emerging from the earth with hands in *añjali,* representing Bhū-devī or Mahāśvetā. Below the stretched leg of Vishṇu is represented the scene of Vishṇu as a dwarf brahmachārin carrying a stick in the left hand and approaching Bali who is represented dressed as a *yajamāna* carrying a golden pitcher in the right hand and a basket of offerings in the left hand. On his left stands his queen Vindhyāvalī on whose left again stands Śukrāchārya with the right hand in *vyākhyāna-mudrā,* warning Bali against his rash act of charity. Adjoining Śukrāchārya is a *yūpa* (sacrificial post), complete with a garland and fluttering banner, on a platform with the sacrificial horse standing in front. Behind the horse are depicted two of its warrior attendants each holding a sword. Curiously enough one of the warriors wears a hair-dress resembling *jaṭā-bhāra.* An *asura* is shown plunging downwards beneath the left foot of Vishṇu which is being worshipped by Rāhu, represented with a broad terrific face with bulging eyes. Beneath Rāhu is depicted Jāmbavān seated in

vīrāsana with his hands in *añjali*. The oval halo of the god is flanked by *vidyādharas* carrying garland and by two gods (probably Brahmā and Śiva) whose heads alone are seen wearing *jaṭā-mukuṭa*. They peep out of a thick screen of clouds which is schematically depicted. On either side are depicted circular orbs representing the sun and the full moon.

This is a medieval version of the same scene with the self-same dramatis personae as represented on the Lajimpat and Changu Narayan images, but completely devoid of animation and without any inter-relation between the figures of the narrative. All the figures are depicted in a full frontal pose and are completely wooden and static. Even the great god is a mere caricature of the old dynamic one. From the degenerate style and the attribute of *vajra* indicating the creeping influence of Tāntricism the figure is attributable to *circa* eleventh century

Four-armed Narasiṁha standing in *pratyālīḍhāsana* in a terrific attitude, rip open the chest of Hiraṇyakaśipu with the main pair of hands and carries a bunch of flowers in the upper right hand and a full blown lotus in the upper left hand. But for the head which is that of a lion complete with manes, he is entirely human in form. His manes rise like flames in anger. He wears a *kaṇṭhi* of a single strand of large pearls *(ekāvalī)* with a cylindrical bead-pendant, *vaijayantī-mālā* in the *upavīta* fashion, *ananta*-shaped armlets, wristlets and lower garment, decorated with stripes and diamond design. He is flanked on the right by two-armed Lakshmī standing in *samabhaṅga* and carrying a fruit-like object (probably *bilva*) and a tall winding stem of lotus flower. The modelling of this figure shows grace and elegance. She wears a net type of head-dress adorned by a jewelled fillet, *patra-kuṇḍalas, kaṇṭhi* (similar to that of the god) broad bunches of armlets and bangles, and anklets, besides a scarf on the upper body shown by faintly incised lines and the usual diaphanous lower garment reaching up to the ankles and fastened by a jewelled *mekhalā* of three strands with a central clasp. On the right of Lakshmī, a little below her, stands winged Garuḍa in human form with hands folded. On the proper left of the god stands a moustached attendant (probably Vishva-kena) wearing a peaked cap and a long coat resembling the Iranian *chogha* fastened by a tight belt of cloth. With his right hand held up in the *stuti-mudrā* (praising attitude) and a long staff in his left hand, he resembles Daṇḍa in the Sūrya images. Hiraṇyakaśipu wears hair resembling a *jaṭā-bhāra* and heavy *kuṇḍalas*, while his torque, armlets, wristlets and lower garment resemble those of the god. His right hand clasps the *gadā* which has partly broken and fallen down, while his left hand is dangling down helplessly. The broken *gadā* alludes to the blow he dealt to a pillar in his palace challenging Prahlāda to prove the omnipresence of Vishṇu. He actually stands on rocks indicating that he represents Girija-Narasiṁha while beneath him are shown two *nāgas* meant to be Śeshanāga with his consort) with hands in *añjali* standing as it were in waist-deep water indicating the nether regions and the cosmic aspect of the scene. The oval halo of the god is flanked on the right by three-headed bust of Brahmā emerging through clouds and carrying *abhaya*-cum-*akshamālā* and a flask type of *kamaṇḍalu* in the two hands. Brahmā wears *jaṭā-bhāra* and torque (of the same type as the principal god) and has extended ear-lobes. On the left are seen busts of two gods similarly emerging from the clouds representing heaven; the right one is Indra carrying lotus and *vajra* and wearing

kirīṭa-mukuṭa, kuṇḍalas, torque, armlets, wristlets and *yajñopavīta.* He is shown as Sahasrāksha (thousand-eyed) with numerous eyes represented horizontally in two rows on his chest and shoulders, besides the third eye appearing on the forehead. The god on the left wearing *jaṭā-jūṭa* and carryig *varada* and *kamaṇḍalu,* probably represents Śiva as a Yogin. The fallen three-peaked jewelled diadem and the broken top portion of the heavy *gadā* of the demon are shown in a cavity of the rock, below the left foot of the god. This image, made of greyish black lime-stone appears to belong to *circa* eighth century. This is a powerful sculpture showing elemental energy and dynamism, though it suffers from the handicap of frontality.

Vishṇu as Viśvarūpa (pl. 28). A good part of the upper right corner of the stele is obliquely broken off. From what has survived, the god appears to have had ten heads. The uppermost head (really a bust complete with two arms) wears a *jaṭā-mukuṭa* though mutilated, and obviously pertains to Brahmā, which is confirmed by the occurrence of a seated four-armed image of Śiva on the proper right flank (it may be presumed that the corresponding missing figure on the left flank represented Vishṇu). The remaining nine heads are arranged in three superposed rows. The god is ten-armed. The right hands hold fruit indicating benediction *(varada-mudrā),* a double axe, sword, bunch of arrows and *chakra.* The left hands carry *gadā (kaumodakī),* a tall bow *(śārṅga),* a highly ornate cushion-like shield, peacock feathers held like *chāmara* and *śaṅkha.* The god stands in *samabhaṅga.* His feet are supported by Bhū-devī, half emerging from the earth, as well as by the flanking *nāgarājas,* who stand in chest deep water flanked on each side by a pair of elephants *(diggajas).* Bhū-devī with the *nāgarājas* and the elephants of the right flank are separated from the lower panel depicting Śeshaśāyī Vishṇu by the long staff *(musala),* held in one of his right hands.

The lower panel represents Vishṇu reclining on the coils of Ādiśesha. The god, who may alternately represent Saṅkarshaṇa, is four-armed and carries a powerful *musala* in the lower right hand, tall standard crowned by a double-faced *makara* as well as a plough-share (a combination of *hala* and *makara-ketu)* in the upper left hand and a flask in the lower left hand.

Viśvarūpa is flanked on each side by a flying figure carrying floral offerings, perhaps representing Lakshmī and Urvaśī (or Bhū-devī) which are represented above the *nāgas* and the *diggajas.* On the left of the left female figure is represented a stalky figure of flying Garuḍa in human form with hands in *añjali* who is recognised by his wings, serpent-garland and plumes arranged as a three-tiered *prabhāvalī.* On the right of the right female figure is represented two-armed figure of perhaps Arjuna with hands in *añjali* carrying a long bow *(gāṇḍīva)* leaning against his right shoulder. He is distinguished by a mailed coat as befits a warrior and wears *kirīṭa-mukuṭa, kuṇḍalas,* torque and wristlets, resembling those of the main god.

Of the nine heads of the god, the three lowest are treated like those of Maheśa-mūrti, the central one wearing *kirīṭa-mukuṭa* pertains to Purushottama, while of the two remaining heads, which wear a slightly different type of *kirīṭa-mukuṭa,* the right one is terrific and the left one is of the female type with thick lower lips and a tender expression. The right head

wears a *sarpa-kuṇḍala* and is shown as terrific with bulging eyes, a third eye on the forehead, gaping mouth, exposed teeth, and knit eye-brows, resembling the Aghora form of Śiva, but dons a *kirīṭa-mukuṭa* adorned by a skull. The three heads of the central row are all alike and wear the same type of *kirīṭa-mukuṭa* and *ratna-kuṇḍalas* as the middle head of the lowest row. Of the next upper row, the central head wears a *jaṭā-mukuṭa* pertaining probably to Brahmā, while the head on the right wears a *kirīṭa-mukuṭa* of the same type as worn by the female head of the lowest row. The main face (the central one of the lowest row) of the god wears a *kirīṭa-mukuṭa* adorned by three circular medallions, the middle one being larger. He also wears circular *ratna-kuṇḍalas,* torque of a single strand of pearls *(ekāvalī), yajñopavīta,* wristlets, *udara-bandha* and a diaphanous lower garment with schematically arranged folds between the legs. The scarf falling over the thighs is connected with the *udara-bandha*, which shows side-knots higher up and hanging sashes lower down.

On the surviving portion of the proper left side of the backslab are seen at least two rows of bearded ascetics wearing *jaṭā-mukuṭa* with emaciated bodies. The corresponding figures on the right side, which are well preserved, show the following (from the bottom upwards:) 1) Two ascetics wearing *jaṭā-mukuṭa* with hands in *añjali;* 2) Four Lokapālas in two rows, the upper row showing Indra and Yama both wearing *kirīṭa-mukuṭa;* the former carrying flower and *vajra* and the latter carrying staff. The lower row shows Varuṇa carrying *pāśa* and Kubera wearing a gorgeous coiffure falling on one side, carrying purse. 3) Five successively superposed rows of ascetics wearing *jaṭā-mukuṭa* with hands in *añjali.* On the top of this side is represented four-armed Śiva seated on lotus and carrying *varada,* rosary, *triśūla* and flask. He is flanked on the right by the solar disc. The missing counterpart on the left may have been carved with figures of Vishṇu and a disc of the moon.

The stele is practically perforated around the heads of the god and the little ledges connecting the heads with the back-slab are utilized for carving attendant figures of flying *vidyādharas* with hands in *añjali,* diving figures with hands in *añjali,* mailed figures carrying bow and arrow etc.

The flying figures of Lakshmī and Urvaśī (or Bhū-devī) wear a triangular diadem on the head. The modelling of these female figures, the main god, the reclining Vishṇu lower down and particularly of the elephant figures is noteworthy. This image dating from *circa* eighth century recalls to mind the vigour, dynamism and the compositional arrangement of the colossal figure of seven-headed Śiva from Parel, Bombay.

This is a powerful representation of Vishṇu as Supreme God who encompasses within himself the entire cosmos. The transcendental power and immeasurable dimensions are expressed through the vertical extension of the heads in the space and through the spreading arms and the swelling chest, heaving with the latent supernatural energy. The diving and soaring divinities hovering round the god—a concept taken from the Liṅgodbhava form of Śiva—also stress the same idea. Viśvarūpa pervades the universe with his feet planted in the nether regions *(pātāla-loka)* indicated by the *nāgas* and with his uppermost head piercing the heavens, which are shown by the representation of the sun and the moon (the latter broken off) at the top of the stele. The same concept is expressed in terms of horizontal extension by the portrayal of the four *diggajas* and the four Lokapālas.

The threefold arrangement of the heads emphasizes the triple cosmic functions of creation, preservation and dissolution. The ideas of dissolution and creation are epitomised in the compositional arrangement of the stele itself. From the Śeshaśāyī aspect of the god, in the lower field, representing the static stage of dissolution, emanates as it were the main form of Viśvarūpa like a lotus-stalk culminating in the crowning head of Brahmā who symbolizes creation. This great emanation is being watched with bewilderment by an admiring galaxy of gods and *rishis* who crowd round Viśvarūpa. This image indeed attempts a comprehensive visual representation of the Vedic myths of creation, a synthesis of the four *vyūhas* and the grand concept of Vishṇu as Virāṭ-rūpa as propounded in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. The image shows remarkable agreement with the Virāṭ-rūpa of Kṛishṇa as described in the *Bhagavadgītā* and the identification is reinforced by the presence of Arjuna depicted as a mailed warrior carrying his *gāṇḍīva* bow.

IMAGES OF SŪRYA

Sūrya is the most important of the Vedic solar deities which were collectively known as Ādityas. Their number, indefinite in the early Vedic text, was later fixed as twelve, though there was no rigid uniformity regarding their names and attributes. Sūrya, as the visible celestial luminary, was represented in the beginning and, often subsequently, in the form of an orb, disc or wheel. The cult worship and iconography of Sūrya absorbed, in course of time, many features of Iranian sun-worship which are reflected in the so-called *udīchya-vesha* given to the god, comprising a long coat, often armoured, trousers and high boots and some peculiar beliefs and practices connected with sun-worship. Representations of the sun-god start in India from the first century BC and become popular from the Kushana period onwards. Sūrya figures among the most popular Brahmanical gods and was worshipped either independently or together with or as a constituent of the Navagrahas, which were propitiated to ward off evils and diseases and to ensure happiness and prosperity.

Sun-worship was popular also in Nepal and we have epigraphical evidence for the installation of an image of the sun-god[1] in the year 402 (AD 480) during the reign of the Lichchhavi king Mānadeva. No Sūrya image, however, is hitherto known from the Kathmandu Valley of a date earlier than the eleventh century.

The earliest known (pl. 67) image comes from a water-conduit at Naxal, Kathmandu and is now preserved in the National Museum, Kathmandu. Besides being the earliest, it is also remarkable in several other respects like investing the god with the *udichya-vesha* (northern dress) comprising the tunic, trousers and the high boots. The *kirīṭa-mukuṭa* with

[1] This particular sun-god was called Indra *(Indro nāma divākaraḥ)*. Gnoli, *op. cit.*, p. 10. It is interesting to note that Indra is mentioned as one of the Ādityas in the *Atharvaveda* and the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* (I, 1, 9, 1-3). Indra is also referred to as one of the Twelve Ādityas in the *Suprabhedāgama*, Gopinath Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Madras, 1914, I, Appendix C, pp. 83-84) and also in the *Bhavishya*, *Kūrma* and *Bhāgavata Purāṇas* and the *Śabdakalpadruma* (N. K. Bhattasali, *Iconography of Buddhist and Brahmanical Sculptures in the Dacca Museum*, Dacca 1929, p. 155).

conspicuous collars are among its exceptional features. So are also the two kneeling devotees on the flanks which are associated with the images of Padmapāṇi Lokeśvara dating from the ninth-tenth centuries. The dignified physiognomy of the god with wide open eyes, the symmetrical arrangement of the various constituents, the detailed treatment of the lotus blossoms held in Sūrya's hands and crisp rendering of the lotus scrolls on the *prabhāvalī* are noteworthy. The god stands in *samabhaṅga* and carries full-blown lotus flowers in the two hands with palm-lines deeply incised (the deep incisions look suspiciously modern). He is draped in a double-breasted tunic with wide collars secured by an *udara-bandha* with a broad suspended loop and sash-ends fluttering schematically like a fan on either side. Below the *udara-bandha* is seen a jewelled waist-band with a central clasp securing the lower garment, though it is not at all clear where the tunic ends and the lower garment begins. The lower garment which is tucked into the high boots looks partly like trousers and partly like *dhotī* with centrally suspended folds and slightly spreading lateral folds. The image is inscribed and dated NS 179 (AD 1058), the inscription referring to the god as *Āditya* (pl. 70A).

The next image of the sun-god, originally from Thapahiti, Patan and now deposited in the Archaeological Garden at Patan, is inscribed and dated NS 185 (AD 1065) and refers to the god as *Mūlāditya.* It represents Sūrya as a well-built stately figure without boots, flanked by Daṇḍa and Piṅgala, each standing in an easy *tribhaṅga* and holding a staff. The flanking figure on the proper left also holds a *chāmara.* In the absence of the distinctive iconographic attributes, it is, however, difficult to distinguish Daṇḍa from Piṅgala. Sūrya wears a *kirīṭa-mukuṭa* and is dressed and ornamented exactly like contemporary standing figures of Vishṇu and Padmapāṇi-Lokeśvara. The treatment of the *udara-bandha* and the lower garment with the suspended loop and the central lateral folds indeed hark back to the ninth century convention.

The next image of Sūrya from Saugal Tol, Patan, inscribed and dated NS 203 (AD 1083), is almost a replica of the previous image, but with a taller build and a higher crown for the main god.

The next Sūrya image, fixed in a small shrine at Bhaktapur, stands on a large lotus pedestal. From the same lotus stalk stem smaller lotuses harbouring seated figures of the remaining eight planets, arranged in a *maṇḍala,* which together with the principal figure of the sun-god constitute the Navagraha group (pl. 70B). Chandra and Maṅgala, seated on the proper left and right flanks of the halo of Sūrya are easily identified by their respective attributes, viz. a pair of lotuses and a śakti held in the hands. Below Maṅgala and Chandra are depicted respectively Brihaspati and Budha, recognised by the *akshamālā* and bow. Again below Brihaspati and Budha are shown respectively Śani and Śukra, the latter identifiable by the *akshamālā* and *kamaṇḍalu.* The lowest pair comprising Rāhu and Ketu are easy to recognize, the former by the sword and the latter by the depiction of only the bust with hands held in *añjali-mudrā.* The modelling of Sūrya who stands under an umbrella follows the model of the two dated images, just described, though the forelegs are stiff and wooden and the central pleats of the lower garment are arranged much too mechanically, suggesting a twelfth century date for the figure.

Roughly contemporary with the above is a stele showing standing Sūrya flanked by Śiva and Vishṇu and riding in his chariot drawn by seven rearing winged horses. Among Sūrya's personal retinue we have, in the middle below Sūrya, charioteer Aruṇa driving the chariot and at the two ends Ushā and Pratyushā shooting arrows. Sūrya and all members of his personal retinue are represented wearing armoured coat which stands in sharp contrast with the bare upper bodies of Śiva and Vishṇu. The sensitive modelling of the body type of Śiva and Vishṇu follows the ninth century convention but the disproportionately large round faces betray a later date.

Sūrya driving a chariot of seven horses and accompanied by his charioteer and Ushā and Pratyushā became a very popular type which continued down to the eighteenth century. An example of this from Banepa dated NS 514 (AD 1394) introduces beneath the chariot two demons, weilding *gadā* and representing the forces of darkness, who are being shot at by the twin archers Ushā and Pratyushā (pl. 72A). Sūrya here has a typical Nepali face with a broad forehead and a smiling expression. A variant of the above type is found enclosed by the eight other *grahas* in a *maṇḍala,* the entire composition comprising the image of the Navagrahas dominated by Sūrya. One such image in Tabahal, Kathmandu is dated NS 583 (AD 1462).

One of the niches on the eastern side of the Siddha Pokhari at Bhaktapur contains an image of Sūrya riding a similar chariot and with the same complement of companions but enclosed by as many as sixteen Ādityas, each carrying, like the principal god, a pair of lotus blossoms held by the stalk. The image is dated NS 589 (AD 1468).

Side by side with standing figures of Sūrya we also get figures of the god seated in *padmāsana* in his chariot drawn by either one or five or seven winged horses, and represented with or without attendants or companions. An image of Sūrya from Kirtipur, dated NS 772 (AD 1651) presents an interesting variant of this type which shows Sūrya seated in *padmāsana* on a couchant horse (pl. 69A).

We may now notice the aberrant types of Sūrya images. A worn out circular stele from Sikha Narayana of *circa* sixteenth century shows Sūrya seated on a throne which is placed on the usual type of chariot drawn by seven horses and with an unusual by large crowd of companions and attendants arranged below and on the sides of the main figure.

A badly defaced contemporary square stele from the Kumbheśvara Tank at Patan shows Sūrya standing in the usual type of chariot accompanied by a multiple group of figures, besides the usual companions. Brahmā and Vishṇu are represented on the right and left flanks and Śiva above the head of Sūrya indicating that the founder of the image was devoted to all the gods but considered Śiva as the highest. It is interesting to note that two worn out figures each perched on a lotus pedestal and resembling Buddha, are seen flanking the canopy of the umbrella depicted in the upper field of the stele, suggesting the thoroughly eclectic religious inclinations of its founder.

Two figures of Sūrya of the seventeenth century betray clear impact of Tāntric influence. One of them from the Sundari Chowk, Patan shows Sūrya, with his Śakti on his lap, seated on a lotus pedestal marked by a winged rearing horse. Sūrya is four-armed,

carrying, besides the usual pair of lotus blossoms, *abhaya* and *kalaśa*. An interesting feature of this image is its background of clouds, represented in the Chinese style. The other image from Hanuman Ghat, Bhaktapur represents four-headed and ten-armed Sūrya standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on a pair of recumbent horses. Besides the usual lotus blossoms held in the main pair of hands, Sūrya also carries *abhaya*, rosary, arrow and javelin in the right hands and shield, bow, goad and *varada* in the left hands.

Independent images of Chandra are also available to a limited extent in Nepal, but none of these is assignable to a date earlier than the Late Malla period. According to the iconographic texts Chandra or Soma should hold a pair of *kumudas* (white water-lilies) and his chariot may be drawn by either horses or geese. In actual practice the Nepal artists only replaced the seven horses by the seven geese and modelled the Chandra image after the familiar Sūrya icon. No distinction was made even in regard to the attributes held in the hands and Chandra was represented, like Sūrya, holding a pair of lotus blossoms, wearing armour and riding in a chariot, accompanied by the charioteer flanked by the two female archers shooting arrows. Of the two representative Chandra images, one from Gokarna, assignable to the eighteenth century (pl. 68A), is simpler, while that from Gaidhara, Patan, datable to *circa* seventeenth century, depicts the god surrounded by the other members of the Navagraha group including Sūrya in a *maṇḍala* (pl. 68B). In both of them Chandra can be distinguished from Sūrya only by his chariot drawn by seven flying geese in the place of horses.

Lastly we may note a pair of terracotta figures from Rani Pokhari, Kathmandu depicting a two-armed god holding *kumudas* (water-lily blossoms) in the hands and riding a crocodile mount. Since Chandra holds water-lilies and is believed to have emanated from *Varuṇa* whose mount is crocodile, Chandra has been depicted riding a crocodile as is prescribed in the illustrated iconographical text of the *Pratishṭhālakshaṇasāra-samuchchaya*, published from Nepal as *Devatāchitra-saṁgrahātmaka*, I, (Kathmandu, 1963), p. 59.

There is a small terracotta shrine on a watertank at Bhaktapur which enshrines the terracotta figure of a two-armed god holding lotus blossoms and riding a peacock. Since Maṅgala is believed to have emanated from Kārttikeya whose mount is peacock, the god is identifiable with Maṅgala. It is interesting to note that peacock has actually been prescribed as a *vāhana* of Maṅgala in the illustrated iconographical text of the *Pratishṭhālakshaṇasārasamuchchaya*, p. 60.

IMAGES OF ŚIVA

The symbolic worship in the form of *liṅga* is conceptually older than the iconic worship of Śiva in India. That this was true also for Nepal is proved by a number of inscribed *liṅgas*, datable to the fifth and sixth centuries AD found in the Valley. The practice of naming *Śiva-liṅgas* after the persons who consecrated them also obtained in Nepal which was celebrated since early ages as the land of Lord Paśupatinātha. It is, therefore, stands to reason that the symbolic worship of Śiva was quite old and well-established in the land.

The iconic worship of Śiva appears to have started with the *mukha-liṅgas,* which combine the symbolic with the anthropomorphic forms. Some examples of *mukha-liṅgas* from Nepal with one face and quite a few with four faces are known. An *ekamukha-liṅga* from the Paśupati area (pl. 53A) with a fine oval face and thick warm lower lip recalling the Indian *mukha-liṅgas* of the Gupta period is attributable to *circa* sixth century. Two *chaturmukha-liṅgas* from Deo-Patan and one from Nala, which are typical of the class, have been illustrated. These show the main or eastern face as that of Tatpurusha-Mahādeva, the southern face as that of Aghora-Bhairava, the northern face as that of Vāmadeva-Umā and the western face as that of Sadyojāta-Nandin while the top represents the invisible fifth face of Īśāna-Sadāśiva. The face of Aghora-Bhairava is fierce and terrific and usually the serpent and the skull are associated with it. All other faces are beatific, that of Vāmadeva-Umā being particularly handsome. In Nepal all of them are represented as two-armed carrying the same attributes, viz. the rosary, being a symbol of the re-integration of this world, and the water-jar. The specimen from the Bhubaneśvarī temple, referable to *circa* tenth-eleventh century (pl. 53B), resembles the main deity of the Paśupati temple and its principal eastern face representing Tatpurusha-Mahādeva has a handsome physiognomy with meditative expression. The other specimen from Tāmreśvara (the metallic mask alone is visible covering and conforming in contours to the original stone *liṅga*) is stylistically not earlier than the twelfth century (pl. 54B) and has the four usual faces, of which the north one pertaining to Vāmadeva-Umā actually represents the head of Ardhanārīśvara, with the right half marked by luxuriant curls and a *patra-kuṇḍala,* belonging to Umā, and the left half to Vāmadeva, wearing *jaṭā-mukuṭa* and a *sarpa-kuṇḍala* (which is unusual). The southern face of Aghora-Bhairava shows knit eye-brows and wears *jaṭā-mukuṭa* adorned with skull and crescent and a *sarpa-kuṇḍala* in one of the ears. The *chaturmukha-liṅga* from Nala is largely similar and shows one of the faces wearing a sort of *kirīṭa-mukuṭa,* the developed design of which indicates that the specimen is not earlier than the fourteenth century (pl. 54A).

Two earliest known specimens of fully anthropomorphic forms of Śiva from Nepal belong to the sixth century, one of them being precisely dated in AD 573.[1] But since these show artistically developed and complicated family-group of Umā-Maheśvara, they should have been preceded by simpler independent figures of Śiva and Pārvatī which are rather rare. A two-armed deity with the crescent in the curly locks and the third eye clearly marked on the forehead is under worship in a small shrine at Aryaghat, adjoining the Paśupatinātha temple and is locally known as Virūpāksha. Now Virūpāksha was a form of Śiva and according to some texts one of the Ekādaśa Rudras as well as a Śaiva guardian deity but the image does not conform to any textual description. On stylistic considerations it may be assigned to *circa* fourth-fifth century. The earliest known independent sculpture of Śiva, belongs to *circa* seventh century and comes like the associated image of Pārvatī, from Visalnagar in Kathmandu. Similar independent images of Śiva and Pārvati of *circa* tenth century are also found in the Kumbheśvara temple at Patan. Standing in

[1] *Ancient Nepal*, No. 4 pp. 39-44, pl. VII. The undated specimen of similar theme and date is published in *Ancient Nepal,* No. 1, p. 26, pl. IIB

samabhaṅga, they form a pair stylistically and show a softly modelled heavy body type and wear similar *mukuṭa* and certain ornaments like torque, armlets and *mekhalā*. Śiva is four-armed, carrying *varada*-cum-*ratna,* rosary, *triśūla* and water-flask and wears *yajñopavīta, uttarīya* tied as a *udara-bandha* with a centrally suspended loop and fluttering sash-ends on the sides and a lower garment with schematically arranged central folds. Pārvatī is two-armed, carrying *varada*-cum-*ratna* and a blue lotus (mutilated) and wears the same dress as worn by the goddesses from the seventh to the tenth centuries.

The next sculpture, from Gokarṇa, represents Śiva like any other god, standing in *samabhaṅga* on a lotus pedestal, flanked by two figures which stand in *ābhaṅga* on smaller lotus pedestals, issuing from the same stalk. Śiva is four-armed and has the same attributes and wears practically the same dress and ornaments as on the previous image. The flanking figure on the proper left is Pārvatī whose attributes, dress and ornaments are similar to the previous figure. The flanking figure on the right is a two-armed god who wears a peculiar *mukuṭa,* usually associated with Indra. His right hand, which is mutilated, may be presumed to be held in *varada* while his left hand carries what looks like a book *(vajra?)*. Stylistically this sculpture is assignable to *circa* eleventh century.

Independent images of standing Śiva, carrying the same attributes, continued to be made in subsequent centuries and show the stylistic peculiarities of the respective ages to which they belonged. The later images are often seen to be ithyphallic or draped in the tiger-skin as a loin-cloth, as illustrated by a very late eighteenth century image from Hanumanghat, Bhaktapur with a flamboyant background.

Tantric influence became dominant during the later Malla period and many peculiar and sometimes weird forms of Śiva were conceived. Two examples are noteworthy. The distinguishing feature of one is the depiction of Śiva as five-headed and four-armed carrying *abhaya* and *paraśu* in the right hands and *mṛiga* and *varada* in the left hands. A sculpture of this variety kept in the National Museum, Kathmandu, shows Śiva seated oddly on a lotus in *lalitāsana* with his right foot resting on Nandī represented couchant and regardant. Śiva wears *mukuṭa* on all the heads, *sarpa-kuṇḍalas,* torque, *mālā, sarpopavīta, sarpa-valayas* and *muṇḍa-mālā*. Below his lotus seat are shown a crowd of adoring gods seated in two tiers in a hilly setting, representing Kailāśa. Another Tantric form of Śiva comes from Hanumanghat, Bhaktapur which shows the god as four-headed and six-armed, standing in *ālīḍhāsana* with his feet resting on a pair of bulls. He holds *abhaya, akshamālā* and *paraśu* in the right hands and *triśūla, mṛiga* and *kalaśa* in the left hands. While the National Museum image belongs to *circa* sixteenth century, the Hanumanghat image is assignable to *circa* eighteenth century.

UMĀ-MAHEŚVARA

Śiva depicted seated with his consort and known in iconographic texts variously as Umā-Maheśvara, Āliṅgana-mūrti or Umāsahita-mūrti was a very favourite theme in Nepal. The earliest inscribed image of this theme from Patan dated 495 (AD 573)[1] shows

[1] *Ancient Nepal,* No. 4, pp. 39-44, pl. VII

the divine couple without any attendants. Śiva is *ūrdhva-meḍhra* and two-armed and is represented seated in *sukhāsana* with his right hand holding *varada* and fruit kept on his thigh, while his left hand, which is broken off, presumably held Pārvatī in embrace. Śiva is draped only in a lower garment and wears a heavy *mukuṭa* widening towards the top and few ornaments, viz. two types of *kuṇḍalas* (perhaps a *sarpa-kuṇḍala* in the left ear), torques and wristlets. Pārvatī is seated in a graceful *sukhāsana,* her right shoulder reclining against Śiva. The weight of her body rests on her right hand placed against Śiva's folded left leg, while her left hand is kept languidly on her flexed left knee. Pārvatī wears only a lower garment. Her face is mutilated and of her ornaments only torque and bracelets can be made out. In spite of the poor preservation of the sculpture and the annoying modern restorations, the modelling of the powerful chest of Śiva and the supple waist of Pārvatī reminds one of Aurangabad and Ellora. An almost contemporary sculpture of the same theme, also from Patan,[1] shows Pārvatī seated in a slightly different posture and accompanied by an attendant.

The sculpture from Dugahiti Sankhu marks the real beginning of the elaborately composed Śiva-Pārvatī stele, typical of Nepal. Although mutilated and truncated, it shows the divine couple in the Himalayan setting of Kailāsa accompanied by the Nandī bull, Skanda and Pārvatī's maid. Śiva is *ūrdhva-meḍhra* and four-armed seated in *lalitāsana,* the lower right hand holding nose-gay against the chest, the upper right hand in the *vyākhyāna-mudrā,* the upper left hand carrying *triśūla* (mutilated) and the lower left hand holding Pārvatī in *āliṅgana.* Pārvatī, seated in a combined *sukhāsana*-cum-*lalitāsana,* is languidly reclining against her Lord with her right arm placed intimately on his left thigh, while her left hand following the cadence of her serpentine flexion, is gracefully placed on her flexed knee. The dress and ornaments worn by Śiva, comprising a large conical *mukuṭa,* peculiar ear-studs, the *kaṇṭhī* of double strand of pearls, the *yajñopavīta,* the wristlets and the *udara-bandha* with a suspended loop are typical of the eighth century art of Nepal. Pārvatī wears a diadem placed against her heavy bun of braided hair, large *patra-kuṇḍalas, kaṇṭhī* similar to Śiva's bracelets and anklets and is draped in a lower garment secured by a broad *mekhalā.* Although the head of Pārvatī's maid is broken, her graceful stance and finely modelled limbs revealed through her near transparent drapery, like the poise and balance and the supple and sensuous modelling of Pārvatī's body, are reminiscent of the style of Aurangabad and Ellora. The physiognomy of the divine couple, however, is typically Nepalese and the wasp-like rendering of Pārvatī's thin waist, though inspired by Ellora[2], is quite individualistic.

The earliest of the typical, well-preserved steles showing Umā-Maheśvara with a full complement of family members and attendants, assignable to *circa* ninth century comes

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[1] *Ancient Nepal,* No. I, p. 26, pl. IX B. The sculpture has neither been reproduced well nor described fully.

[2] The rocky landscape and the way Śiva is seated in *lalitāsana* with his right leg placed in a rocky recess is akin to the Ravaṇānugraha panel in Ellora Cave 21 (Rāmeśvara).

The reclining posture of Pārvatī, however, is closer to the panel of Śiva-Pārvatī playing dice in Ellora Cave 14, though Ellora definitely shows a sturdier and better integrated body type.

from Kūmbheśvara tank, Patan (pl. 47). This is an elaborate composition of greenish black stone arranged in three parallel tiers and shows Śiva-Pārvatī enjoying domestic bliss in the rocky setting of Kailāsa. Śiva is *ūrdhva-meḍhra* and four-armed seated in *lalitāsana* over a couch. Śiva's lower right hand (mutilated) is extended in *varada,* he playfully holds a few curls of his *jaṭā* in his upraised upper right hand to receive Gaṅgā (indicating his aspect as Gaṅgādhara-mūrti), he carries *triśūla*-cum-*paraśu* in the upper left hand and has caressingly placed his lower left hand on the right shoulder of Pārvatī, supporting the weight of her shoulders and head. Pārvatī is seated in *sukhāsana* on a smaller couch kneeling against her Lord with her right arm resting intimately on Siva's left thigh and the left hand placed with easy grace on her left knee. Śiva wears the crescent on the right side of his *jaṭā-mukuṭa, ratna-kuṇḍalas,* torque consisting of two strands of pearls with a common *madhya-maṇi, yajñopavīta,* wristlets, *udara-bandha* and a lower garment fastened by a jewelled belt. Pārvatī wears *jaṭā-mukuṭa, patra-kuṇḍalas,* similar torques, wristlets, bell-anklets, besides a scarf *(uttarīya)* and a lower garment fastened by an elaborate jewelled belt of three strands with a central clasp. Behind Śiva is represented couchant Nandī with his dew-lap sensitively carved. A *gaṇa* attends on Nandī offering eatables. Over the head of Nandi is seated two-armed Kārttikeya wearing *śikhaṇḍaka* type of head-dress, and carrying a fruit in the right hand and śakti with a fluttering banner in the left hand. Behind Pārvatī is represented a flying figure of four-armed *vidyādharī* carrying lotus flower, *chāmara,* a bowl of offerings and sword. The dangling right foot of Pārvatī is caressingly supported by an attendant with a touching expression of devotion. The background also shows rocks, behind which stand waist upwards two four-armed *dvārapālās* (guards) of Śiva, flanking either side of his oval halo and carrying fruit (the left hand guard carries a flower instead of a fruit), rosary, *triśūla*-cum-*paraśu* and a flask-shaped water-jar. These guards wear different types of *jaṭā-mukuṭa.* On the pedestal forming the lowest tier are represented *gaṇas* together with four-armed Gaṇeśa and Bhṛingī dancing or playing music. From the proper right end they are: 1) *Ulūka-mukha* (owl-faced one) seated on rock and playing on flute, 2) dancing *Kumbhāṇḍa* with a terrific face carved on the belly and his right hand raised in the *stuti-mudrā,* 3) dancing four-armed Gaṇeśa, 4) dancing Ghaṇṭākarṇa, 5) dancing Bhṛingī with a skeletal frame, 6) Siṁha-mukha playing on a drum suspended from his neck, and 7) seated *Vānara-mukha* playing on cymbals.

Gangā is shown on the top of the stele as descending headlong; she is four-armed with her main pair of hands in *añjali* and holding in the other pair a fluttering scarf which convincingly indicates the terrific speed of her descent from the heavens represented by clouds, flanked by the orbs of the sun and the moon. Śiva is also represented here as Umāprasādana and is shown with his lower left hand placed caressingly on the right shoulder of Pārvatī to assuage her injured feelings on account of the acceptance by Śiva of Gangā, who was after all another female.

The image is remarkable for the exquisite expression of the conjugal love and intimacy of the divine pair and reminds one of the initial verses of Kālidāsa's *Raghuvaṁśa* :

वागर्थाविव सम्पृक्तौ वागर्थं प्रतिपत्तये
जगतः पितरौ वन्दे पार्वती परमेश्वरौ ॥

Note their oval faces with thick warm lips and dignified but tender expression. Note also the graceful double bend of the delicately modelled body of Pārvatī which closely hugs and caresses the limbs of her Lord. This image type is inspired by the Śiva-Pārvatī groups enjoying domestic bliss as represented at Ellora, but it offers a novel reinterpretation of the theme by combining also the Gangādhara and the Umāprasādana aspects in the same composition and by underlining the expressions of tender intimacy and snug homeliness.

This is one of the most popular sculptural compositions and is found in hundreds spread over the entire length and breadth of the Valley, attesting the hold which Śaivism and particularly the theme of Śiva as Umāliṅgana-mūrti has ever had on the popular mind of Nepal. It is, however, to be noted that no two sculptures are exactly alike and there are always some variations in details, though the general type shows a surprising uniformity right from the ninth to the sixteenth century AD.

Two dated steles[1] of the same theme are known, which are significant for providing chronological fixed points. The stele from Kulimtol, Patan, dated NS 107 (AD 986) showing the *ūrdhvaretas* aspect of Śiva prominently, represents Skanda astride his *vāhana* peacock, shifts the adoring and descending Gaṅgā on the right flank of Śiva's halo and introduces a flying *vidyādhara* carrying a garland on the corresponding left flank and adds a large umbrella as a crowning adornment of the stele. The other stele dated NS 132 (AD 1011) from Ganchanani, Patan represents Śiva-Pārvatī as well as Skanda (wihout a mount) seated in the same posture as on the ninth century stele, but the Gaṅgādhara aspect is emphasized here by a current of water flowing down from the hands of Gaṅgā (mutilated) and being received on the tresses of the *jaṭā* of Śiva who is shown wearing an elaborate *jaṭā-bhāra* and a *sarpa-kuṇḍala* in the right ear and a *ratna-kuṇḍala* in the left ear. This sculpture also introduces two standing maids attending on Pārvatī, called in the texts as Jayā and Vijayā. Another stele from Patan (pl. 50) assignable to *circa* tenth century represents the same theme with some interesting variations. The entire retinue is shown in a more lively and dramatic posture, except for the *gaṇas* as static, led by Gaṇeśa, who are depicted seated in the lowest tier. Skanda's representation as a baby straining to reach up to the knee of his divine father with a toy-like peacock by his side adds a homely touch. Its modelling is as sensitive and suave as that of the ninth century stele, though the physiognomy is broader and of the Nepalese cast. The Gaṅgādhara aspect is absent on this stele. The figures in the lowest tier below the pedestal represent from proper right to left, (1) Ghaṇṭākarṇa (2) three-headed, three-legged and three-armed figure of transformed Bhṛingī holding fruit, rosary and book in the three hands (3) four-armed Gaṇeśa, (4) four-armed *Kumbhāṇḍa* carrying the same attributes as Śiva's body-guards but showing a terrific face in the belly, and, lastly (5) emaciated Bhṛingī Rishi shown in profile, praising Śiva with the upraised right hand and carrying water-flask in the left hand.

[1] *Ancient Nepal*, No. 1, pp. 27-28, pl. XI

To the same time approximately may belong the simpler and smaller stele from Chyasaltol, Patan, published by N. R. Banerjee[1] showing Śiva-Pārvatī seated in a similar pose but with both the left hands of Śiva embracing and caressing Pārvatī and with fewer attendants. There are no figures at all above the haloed heads of Śiva-Pārvatī. On the right is seen probably Skanda astride the bull with a seated devotee below, while on the left is seen Pārvatī's maid standing with the upper pair of hands in the *añjali-mudrā* and carrying a sword in the lower left hand with an attendent below supporting Pārvatī's right foot.

To *circa* eleventh century may be assigned the stele from Nagal Tol, Kathmandu illustrated by Kramrisch[2] which shows a bird perched on the left arm of Pārvatī and typical Nepalese faces for all the figures. To the next century may be attributed a stele from the Saraswatī Temple without the Gaṅgādhara aspect and two steles from the Gairidhara, Patan of which one is of the usual run, while the other is of a novel type, and is described below :—

Śiva-Pārvatī is represented seated in *ardhaparyaṅkāsana* in the rocky setting of Kailāsa (pl. 48). Śiva is four-armed holding in the principal pair of hands a vase, while his upper right and lower left hands are held respectively in *abhaya* and *varada*. Pārvatī is seated oddly in the lap of her Lord and is also four-armed and holds a vase with her main pair of hands. A little lower down on the right is seated on a rock, a corpulent male figure (probably Kārttikeya) carrying *abhaya* and spear *(śakti)* with a fluttering banner. On the corresponding left side is seated a two-armed maid of Pārvatī carrying sword and shield. In the upper field on either side of the divine pair emerges from the rocks a four-armed attendant guard carrying *abhaya,* rosary, *triśūla* and *kamaṇḍalu* or *kapāla*. Above the halo are represented two flying *vidyādharīs* carrying a bowl full of flowers in one hand and a garland in the other. The lowest tier below the pedestal is carved with a seated bearded devotee on the left end, representing the donor couple. Other figures represented from right to left are Siṁhamukha playing on cymbals, Bhṛingī dancing, Gaṇeśa dancing, Ghaṇṭākarṇa dancing and Vānara-mukha playing on a drum. All figures here have definitely Nepalese features with broad face, prominent cheek-bones and puppet-like mouth. This image fashioned in greenish stone appears to date from *circa* twelfth century. It has been plausibly suggested that Śiva, carrying like his consort, vase in the main pair of hands, represents Kumbheśvara,[3] the deity after whom this fountain and the temple nearby are known.

To the thirteenth century may be attributed three steles, one from Pharping,[4] the second from the Bajrayoginī temple, Sankhu and the third from the Archaeological Garden, Patan all emphasizing the Gaṅgādhara aspect. The last exhibits disintegrated modelling and a thoroughly Nepalese physiognomy and introduces some innovations. In this image the lion mount supports the right foot of Pārvatī whose injured feeling for

[1] *Ancient Nepal,* No. 1, pl. X B, p. 26

[2] Stella Kramrisch, *op. cit.,* fig. IX, p. 41. The learned authoress has dated the image to the 8th-9th century which is a little too early.

[3] *Ancient Nepal,* No. 1, p. 31

[4] Discussed and illustrated in *Boston Museum Bulletin,* LXVI, No. 345 (1968) by Pratapaditya Pal who has dated this sculpture to the 15th century.

the attention paid to Gaṅgā is being assuaged by Śiva by caressing her bosom. The depiction of the Himalayan hillscape by conical configurations is also noteworthy.

The theme continued to be in vogue till the sixteenth century with progressively loose modelling and with some variations in the number and grouping of the attendants including Pārvatī's maids and the *gaṇas* below the pedestal. One of the latest examples comes from Kvalkhu, Patan which rearranges the iconographical cliche and introduces around Umā-Maheśvara seated figures of Brahmā and Vishṇu, Gaṇeśa and Kumāra and Śiva as Yogī and Bhairava in three tiers, the entire composition forming a *maṇḍala,* which was consistent with the Tāntric proclivities of the age.

Alongside the larger steles, described above, smaller sculptures, representing Umā-Maheśvara were also produced both in stone and metal. We have already noted two such early sculptures from Patan, one undated and the other dated 495 (AD 573).

The next known representation of this theme from Nepal is the bronze image of Umā-Maheśvara in the Baroda Museum and Picture Gallery.[1] It shows four-armed Śiva seated on a cushion in *lalitāsana* embracing with one of his left hands Pārvatī who is seated in *sukhāsana* leaning against Śiva, with her right hand placed on Śiva's left leg and the left hand resting on her flexed left knee. Śiva's lower right hand is in the *vyākhyāna-mudrā* while his upper right hand is in the *kaṭaka* pose and held some object, which is now missing, like the attribute of one of the left hands. The poise and stance of the divine couple and particularly of Pārvatī are directly inspired by Ellora (cf. the panel of Śiva-Pārvatī playing dice in Ellora, Cave 14). The features are sharp but softly modelled. Stylistically the image is assignable to *circa* tenth-eleventh century, although Kramrisch dated it to eighth-ninth century.

To *circa* thirteenth century are to be attributed three bronzes of Umā-Maheśvara from Nepal, published by Pratapaditya Pal.[2] One of these shows Umā-Maheśvara seated on the back of Nandī who is represented as regardant. Of the remaining two bronzes, one is simple and unaccompanied by any other figures, while the other is a fairly elaborate composition comprising the divine couple flanked by seated Sarasvatī on proper right and by Skanda astride the peacock on left, besides five seated figures carved on the front face of the pedestal and dancing Bhṛingī and a *gaṇa* on the two shorter sides. The figures on the front face of the pedestal are Gaṇeśa in the middle, with the usual body-guards of Śiva at the two ends and Jayā and Vijayā, Pārvatī's maids, in between. While Gaṇeśa and Śiva's guards are four-armed, carrying the usual attributes, Jayā and Vijayā are only two-armed, the deity holding *varada*-cum-*ratna* and *triśūla* in the right hands pertaining to Śiva and *pustaka* and *utpala* in the left hands pertaining to Pārvatī. The figure has a handsome and effeminate appearance with a well-modelled body type and wears *jaṭā-bhāra* adorned by a diadem, *kuṇḍalas,* torques, *yajñopavīta,* armlets, wristlets, *pādāṅgadas* and a lower garment secured by *mekhalā.* The hair-do below the diadem, the ornaments of the ears and legs

[1] Stella Kramrisch, *op. cit.*, fig. 9. p. 129

[2] *Boston Museum Bulletin,* LXVI, No. 345 (1968). figs. 1-6. The author of the paper, however, has assigned three different centuries (13th, 14th and 15th) to the three bronzes inspite of their striking stylistic kinship.

and the treatment of the lower garment have been distinguished. Thus the deity is clearly seen wearing *sarpa-kuṇḍala* in the right ear and *patra-kuṇḍala* in the left ear and different types of ornaments above the right and left ankles and a tiger skin on the right (Śiva's) side and a *sārī* with central folds on the left (Pārvatī's) side. Half of the third eye on the forehead has been mistakenly shown on the left side pertaining to Pārvatī, whereas it should have been appropriately depicted on the right side pertaining to Śiva.

A terracotta figure of Ardhanārīśvara, assignable to *circa* eighteenth century, from Rani Pokhari, Kathmandu shows the four-armed deity standing in *āliḍhāsana* with the right foot resting on the back of Nandī and the left on that of lion. Like the attributes, the dress and almost all the ornaments are different for the two sides. Thus the right half of Śiva carries rosary and wears *sarpa-kuṇḍala*, *sarpa-keyūras*, *sarpa-valayas*, *muṇḍa-mālā* and is draped in tiger-skin, while the left half of Pārvatī carries *utpala* and broken and wears *ratna-kuṇḍala* and distinctive types of armlets, bangles, *hāra*, *mekhalā* and *vanamālā* and is draped in a *sārī* with a centrally suspended jewelled tassel, characteristic of the eighteenth century Nepalese art (pl. 45B).

HARI-HARA

The syncretistic form of Hari-Hara or Śaṅkara-Nārāyaṇa combines the well-known aspects of Śiva and Vishṇu in the same image. We have evidence for the foundation of an image of Hari-Hara in an inscription dated year 489 (AD 567) from Deo-Patan. The next images of Hari-Hara coming from Naxal, Kathmandu, shows an image of the deity standing in *samabhaṅga* without any attendant. The right half represents Śiva and shows the *jaṭā-mukuṭa* peeping out of the diadem, while the left half shows the *kirīṭa-mukuṭa* of Vishṇu. The ornaments have not been distinguished. The lower right hand is stretched in the *varada* and carries rosary, while the upper right hand holds the *triśūla*. The left hands pertaining to Vishṇu show *chakra* in the upper hand and *śaṅkha* in the lower one. The god wears torque, *ananta*-shaped armlets, wristlets, and *yajñopavīta* and is draped in an *uttarīya* treated as *udara-bandha* with a central suspended loop and lateral ends hanging alongside, besides a loin-cloth which is secured by a *mekhalā*. The lower right and left hands rest on lotus stalks. The modelling of the figure is completely wooden. The figure is, therefore, stylistically assignable to *circa* twelfth century.

We also get images of Hari-Hara flanked by Pārvatī on the right and Lakshmī on the left, all the three figures standing on lotus pedestals issuing from the same central stalk. Of the two representative figures of this type, one comes from Balaju and is assignable to *circa* twelfth century, while the other (pl. 58) comes from Paśupati area and is assignable to *circa* thirteenth century. Iconographically the two are alike. The main deity has the same attributes as the Naxal image and Pārvatī carries *varada*-cum-*ratna* and *utpala*, Lakshmī holds *varada*-cum-*ratna* and lotus, but while the figure from Balaju is closer to the early tradition of representing gods flanked by two female devotees or attendants standing in *ābhaṅga*, the figure from Paśupati area is farther removed from the tradition. Hari-Hara in the latter case stands not on a lotus but on a rectangular pedestal marked with a lotus

stalk. Pārvatī stands on the right on an independent rocky pedestal, indicating her Himalayan association, while Lakshmī stands on an independent lotus pedestal on the left, showing that she is *kamalāsanā*. The god here has a very developed type of oval halo with highly stylised flames. The *prabhāvalī* is a larger version of the halo and shows a broad band of scrolls, fringed by a highly stylised band of flames. The faces are broader and of purely Nepalese cast, particularly of the goddess Pārvatī. While Pārvatī carries *varada* and blue lotus, Lakshmī carries *abhaya* and a lotus held by the stalk. Both of them wear two types of *kuṇḍalas,* viz. *ratna-kuṇḍalas* in the right ear, and *asthi-kuṇḍalas* in the left ear. Further Pārvatī and Lakshmī stand in *tribhanga* which itself indicates a later date.

The theme of Hari-Hara continued to fascinate the Newar artist during the Later Malla period also. We have quite a few specimens of Hari-Hara sculptures without any attendant of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which have completely degenerated into iconographic cliches and are over-burdened with ornamentation which includes flamboyant treatment of drapery. The right half pertaining to Śiva reveals the *jaṭā-mukuṭa* adorned by the crescent and the skull, *sarpa-kuṇḍalas*, *sarpa-valaya* and anklet of snakes, while the left half pertaining to Vishṇu shows *kirīṭa-mukuṭa*, *ratna-kuṇḍala*, *ratna-valaya* and the jewelled *pādāṅgada.* The torques, *mekhalā* and the highly ornamented drapery which fit in with Vishṇu's aspect co-exist with the *sarpa-hāra* which are worn in common, but a distinction has been made with regard to the long *mālā* which is *muṇḍa-mālā* on the right side of Śiva and a *vana-mālā* on the left side of Vishnu. The two representative examples of the latest type of Hari-Hara come from the Śiva temple and the Art Gallery at the Bhaktapur Darbar (pl. 57) and are assignable to the seventh century.

The cult-image of stone in the temple of Hari Śankar at Patan is an elaborate composition representing eight-armed Hari-Śaṅkara, (pl. 59), flanked by Pārvatī on the right and Lakshmī on the left. While the main deity has two mounts, Nandī as regardant on the right (Śiva's) side and Garuḍa in half human form with hands in *añjali* on the left (Vishṇu's) side, Pārvatī and Lakshmī also have their mounts, lion and tortoise, represented on the pedestal. The right half of the deity pertaining to Śiva carries *kamaṇḍalu, aksh-mālā, ḍamaru* and *triśūla* in the four right hands and wears *jaṭā-mukuṭa, sarpa-kuṇḍala*, *sarpa-valayas* and *sarpa-pādāṅgada* and is draped in a tiger skin. The left half pertaining to Vishṇu carries *gadā, śaṅkha, chakra* and *padma* in the four left hands and wears *kirīṭa-mukuṭa* and all jewelled ornaments and is draped in the usual lower garment. The jewelled torque, *hāra, mekhalā* and *vanamālā* as well as the *sarpopavīta* are worn in common. This sculpture is typical of the sixteenth century hieratic art of Nepal.

Lastly we may notice a stone sculpture showing a Tāntric form of Hari-Śaṅkarī from Rani Pokhari, Kathmandu, assignable to *circa* seventeenth century (pl. 60). The goddess is six-headed and twelve-armed and stands in *ālīḍhāsana* with her right foot resting on Garuḍa shown with folded hands and the left one on couchant Nandī. The right hands pertaining to the Vishṇu aspect carry *varada, vajra-ghaṇṭā, padma*, *gadā, śaṅkha* and *chakra*, while the left hands pertaining to the Śiva aspect carry *triśūla*, *utpala*, *khaṭvāṅga*, human head, *ḍamaru* and *abhaya.* Each head wears a three-peaked diadem and shows the third eye. She also wears *patra-kuṇḍalas*, torque, *sarpa-hāra*, *muṇḍa-mālā,* armlets, bangles, *pādāṅgadas* and

bell-anklets and is draped in lower garment fastened by a jewelled belt with a latticed apron. The stone image is datable to *circa* seventeenth century.

NAṬARĀJA

Sculptures of Naṭarāja are less common in Nepal, the earliest example being known from the subsidiary stone shrine, assignable to *circa* eleventh century, in the compound of the Paśupati temple. The western *bhadra* niche of the shrine shows twelve-armed Naṭarāja carrying *varada*, *abhaya*, trident, rosary and *ḍamaru* in five right hands. The upper-most pair of hands holds the two ends of a serpent held stretched as a canopy. The remaining left hands carry bell, bird, *khaṭvāṅga*, and *gajahasta*. Dancing Pārvatī is represented on the left, while Nandī stands behind the god flanked by two-armed dancing Kārttikeya carrying *śakti*. A four-armed attendant-guard stands behind rocks on either side of the head of the god carrying *varada*, rosary, trident and *kamaṇḍalu*. The pedestal shows Gaṇeśa with three *gaṇas* on each side represented as singing and dancing.

From the Sundari Chowk, Patan, dating from the middle of the seventeenth century come two elaborate steles depicting multi-armed Naṭarāja, dancing in *ardhaparyaṅkāsana* with his main pair of hands held in the *abhaya* and *gajahasta* poses and the uppermost right hand held up in the *lalāṭa-tilaka* pose. One of them (see *infra*, p. 45, no. 17) shows sixteen-armed Naṭarāja dancing with his left toes resting on couchant Nandī, surrounded by *gaṇas* and arranged in a *maṇḍala*. The dancing figures at the top and bottom of the stele are identifiable respectively with Bhṛingī and Nandī (in human form), while the animal-headed *gaṇas* are represented as playing on a variety of musical instruments. The other stele (see *infra*, p. 47, No. Lower 1) shows eighteen-armed Naṭarāja dancing in a similar pose with his left toes likewise resting on Nandī as regardant, but the lion mount of Pārvatī is also introduced just to counterbalance Nandī. The bull and the lion mounts are depicted on a lotus pedestal which itself rests on a human corpse, indicating the Tāntric nature of the image. Below the pedestal is centrally carved the skeletal figure of Bhṛingī dancing flanked on each side by four animal-headed *gaṇas*, playing on musical instruments. At the top of the stele is depicted an eight-armed miniature replica of the central figure of Naṭarāja as a crowning ornament.

Lastly we may notice a blatantly Tāntric form of Naṭarāja from Rani Pokhari, Kathmandu, also assignable to *circa* seventeenth century. Naṭarāja here is eighteen-armed dancing in *ardhaparyaṅkāsana* with the left toes resting on a skull-cup. His principal pair of hands significantly carries the bowl and the *vindu-mudrā*, while the second pair of hands holds the *vajra* and the *vajra-ghaṇṭā* which are all Tāntric emblems. Naṭarāja also wears the Tāntric bone-apron over the lower garment.

BRAHMANICAL TĀNTRIC IMAGES IN THE SUNDARI CHOWK, PATAN

The Sundari-Chowk is a quadrangular palace built by the Malla king Siddhi Narasiṁha Malla (*circa* 1620-57). It is a three-storeyed palace, largely built of brick and

timber on a sub-structure of stone plinth with a pent tiled roof. The courtyard is paved with flag stones and contains a circular tank marginally enclosed by two colossal serpents carved in relief. The tank has a fountain, called Kasā-Hiti and its gargoyle, made of gilt copper, represents a *gomukha* with numerous faces of fish and crocodiles issuing from its sides. On the gargoyle is placed a fine image of Lakshmī-Nārāyaṇa sitting on a flying Garuḍa whose wings form an ornate *prabhāvalī*. Both Lakshmī and Nārāyana are seated in *lalitāsana*. Nārāyaṇa holds lotus, *chakra, śaṅkha* and *gadā*. The right hand of Lakshmī is placed on the left foot of Nārāyaṇa, while her left hand is held in the attitute of exposition.

The fountain is treated internally as an octagon. The octagonal facets are carved into niches, with three to five niches in each facet. Each niche is framed between pilasters represented as tree trunks with overhead foliage forming canopy. There are two series of niches all round. The principal facet with the gargoyle facing south shows on the flanks two empty niches, each complete with the usual ornate tympanum.

The next facet on the proper left flank shows five niches in the upper row. The images are described clockwise starting from the left flank of the gargoyle.

1. Niche 1 shows a figure of Hari-Hara with his Śakti. The god is seated in loose *padmāsana*, while his consort is seated in *lalitāsana* on his left thigh. Beneath the seat are represented Nandī and two lions, the mounts respectively of Hara and his consort. In between these mounts is placed winged Garuḍa with folded hands, the *vāhana* of Hari. Hari-Hara is four-armed carrying rosary and trident-cum-axe in the right hands, pertaining to Hara, and *gadā* and *śaṅkha* in the left hands, partaining to Hari. The Śakti is two-armed carrying *āliṅgana* and *abhaya*. Hari-Hara wears *jaṭā-mukuṭa* on the right side and *kirīṭa-mukuṭa* on the left, *sarpa-kuṇḍala* in the right ear and *ratna-kuṇḍala* in the left ear, torques, a long necklace, the right half of which is *muṇḍa-mālā* and the left half a *vaijayantī-mālā*, armlets, wristlets and *pādāṅgadas*. The Śakti wears five-peaked jewelled diadem, *patra-kuṇḍalas*, torque, wristlets, besides a scarf and lower garment, secured by a waist-band (*ratna-mekhalā*). Hari-Hara has a conical nimbus and *prabhāvalī* fringed by flames.

2. The next god is five-headed, four-legged and sixteen-armed deity. Each head is that of a lion, but also shows a pair of horns. Of his two pairs of legs, the upper one is in *lalitāsana* and the lower one in *āliḍhāsana* with his right foot resting on seated Nandī looking up. The god carries rosary, *khaṭvāṅga, mushṭika, ḍamaru*, mace, staff, *chakra* and trident in his right hands and axe, *pāśa*, goad, *vajra*, peacock feathers, serpent, hammer and shield in his left hands. The god is represented with a pot belly and wears fan-shaped raised curls, torque, *muṇḍa-mālā*, armlets, wristlets, *pādāṅgadas* and lower garment. The Śakti of the god is represented dancing in *tribhaṅga* on a seated lion. She is four-armed carrying *varada, pāśa*, goad, and *abhaya*. Out of her three heads only two are shown which is highly unusual. Like the god she also wears a *muṇḍa-mālā*, besides *patra-kuṇḍalas*, torque and wristlets. She is draped in a lower garment with a latticed apron in front.

This appears to be a Śaiva deity of Tāntric form associated with a variety of Siṁha-vāhinī Durgā.

3. This shows a five-headed and twelve-armed form of Vishṇu seated in *padamāsana* on flying Garuḍa, flanked by *nāgīs* with folded hands. Garuḍa is six-armed with his main

pair of hands in *añjali* and carrying in the remaining right hands rosary and *chakra* and in the remaining left hands umbrella and vase-and-foliage. Of the three lower heads of the god the central one represents the human head *(Purushottama)*, while the side heads are of the boar on the right and of the lion on the left. The two crowning heads are also human. The principal head wears *kirīṭa-mukuṭa,* the two side heads have raised curls and the crowning one has a jewelled diadem. The god is twelve-armed. His main right hand carries a jewel like object and the main left hand carrying vase-and-foliage is held in *āliṅgana.* He also carries bunch of flowers, lotus stalk, *gadā, chakra* and rosary in the other right hands, and trident, book, *śaṅkha,* umbrella and *varada* in the other left hands. He wears *ratna-kuṇḍalas,* torque, *vaijayantī-mālā,* wristlets and lower garment secured by a *mekhalā.* The Śakti of the god is seated on his left thigh in *lalitāsana.* She is two-armed and carries *varada* and *abhaya.* She wears jewelled diadem, *patra-kuṇḍalas,* torque, *vaijayantī-mālā,* wristlets and lower garment.

This is a Vaikuṇṭha form of Vishṇu shown with two additional heads and his Śakti under Tāntric influence.

4. A god with terriffic face riding a human mount, represented with his Śakti riding a lion. The god is seated in loose *padmāsana* and wears *muṇḍa-mālā.* He is fourteen-armed carrying in his right hands *abhaya*-cum-*akshamālā, vajra,* goad, *mudgara,* arrow, serpent and *varada.* The left hands carry *abhaya,* bow, flag, trident, shield and śaṅkha and the lowest left hand carried round the waist of the goddess holds vase-and-foliage. The god is represented as *ūrdhvakeśa* with bulging eyes, gaping mouth and protruding fangs. He wears *patra-kuṇḍalas,* torque, *pādāṅgadas* and lower garment.

His Śakti, also wearing *muṇḍa-mālā,* is seated in *lalitāsana.* She is eight-armed with her main right hand carrying a bowl and the main left hand in the *vindu-mudrā.* She carries trident, rosary and sword in the other right hands and hammer, lotus flower and *ḍamaru* in the other left hands.

This is a Śaivite deity with Śakti represented under Tāntric influence.

5. A god with terrific face seated in loose *padamāsana* on horse, while his Śakti with a skeletal frame is seated in *lalitāsana* on a human mount carrying a skull. The god is ten-armed carrying a lotus-shaped *śakti* in the main right hand and fire, *śankha, ḍamaru* and sword in the remaining right hands. He holds a shield, serpent, *chakra,* trident and *pāśa* in the left hands. He is represented as *ūrdhvakeśa* with bulging eyes and gaping mouth and wears *patra-kuṇḍalas,* torques, *muṇḍa-mālā, pādāṅgadas,* wristlets and lower garment. His Śakti is also terrific and is eight-armed. Her main pair of hands carries the bowl and the *vindu-mudrā.* Her other right hands carry trident, arrow and sword, while the other left hands carry *khaṭvāṅga,* I-shaped shield and bell. She is also represented as *ūrdhvakeśa,* her head being flanked by flags marked with four-petalled rosettes. (Most of the Śaktis have similar flags). She wears *patra-kuṇḍalas,* torque, *muṇḍa-mālā,* wristlets and lower garment with a latticed apron. The image represents Chāmuṇḍā with her consort.

6. The next octagonal facet starts with a terrific god seated in loose *padmāsana* represented together with his Śakti. The god appears to be seated on a stag and has raised curls, bulging eyes and gaping mouth and wears a *muṇḍa-mālā.* He is eight-armed and

carries in the principal right hand *abhoya*-cum-*akshamālā* and in the remaining right hands trident, *ḍamaru* and goad. His left hands carry fire, peacock feathers, shield and umbrella. He wears *patra-kuṇḍalas*, torques, wristlets and anklets of snakes and lower garment.

His Śakti who is seated on his lap in *lalitāsana* with her left foot placed on the crown of an elephant mount. Her head-dress is flanked by two flags. She is also eight-armed and carries the bowl and *vindu-mudrā* in her principal pair of hands, the other right hands carrying trident, an object resembling lotus stalk (?) and sword. The other left hands carry shield, *vajra,* and *pāśa,* She wears the usual apparel, a *muṇḍa-mālā* and a lower garment with a latticed apron in front. The image represents Indrāṇī with her consort.

7. A god with terrific face seated in loose *padmāsana* over a serpent mount represented with a boar-headed Śakti. Both of them wear *muṇḍa-mālā.* The god is eight-armed and carries in his principal right hand *abhaya*-cum-*akshamālā* while his other right hands carry *śaṅkha,* arrow and sword. His left hands carry shield, serpent, bow and *khaṭvāṅga.*

His Śakti with boar's head and raised curls is seated on a buffalo looking up. She is also eight-armed and carries in the principal pair of hands the bowl and the *vindu-mudrā.* The remaining right hands carry a trident, a curved staff and a sword. Her other left hands carry shield, bowl and *pāśa.*

This figure probably represents Vārāhi with her consort.

8. This is a tiny gilt brass image fixed in a niche resembling a miniature shrine. The figure is eighteen-armed Mahishāsuramardinī, represented standing and facing front in *pratyālīḍhāsana.* Her right foot is placed over her lion mount, while with the left foot she tramples upon the head of the buffalo (demon) whose tail is held in one of her left hands. On the pedestal is represented a miniature figure of the same goddess, flanked on each side by an attendant carrying the head and tail ends of a serpent *(nāga-pāśa)* in the two hands. Figures of the nine Durgās appear on the *maṇḍala.*

9. A four-armed god seated in loose *padmāsana* with his four-headed Śakti. They are seated on an elaborate wicker pedestal which is carried by three duck-like geese represented as mounts. There is a background of foliage behind these figures. The god has only one head and wears a five-peaked *mukuṭa.* He carries in his hands *vajra,* trident, *chakra* and *gadā.*

His Śakti is four-headed and four-armed. The principal pair of hands carries the bowl and the *vindu-mudrā.* The remaining hands carry the book and rosary, indicating that the goddess is Brāhmanī, which is confirmed by her four heads and the goose mounts which she shares with her consort. They wear the usual dress and ornaments including a long garland.

10. A four-armed god with raised curls and bulging eyes seated in loose *padmāsana* on a human corpse. He carries a skull-cup, sword, shield and *tripatākā*-cum-*āliṅgana.* He wears *muṇḍa-mālā* together with the usual apparel.

His Śakti also wears a *muṇḍa-mālā* and is two-armed. Her right hand is held in *āliṅgana,* while the left hand is held in *vyākhyāna-mudrā.* This may represent a form of Bhairava with his Śakti.

11. The third octagonal facet starts with a four-armed god seated in loose *padmāsana* on a stag, probably representing god Vāyu. He carries a fluttering scarf in the upper pair

of hands, an umbrella-like heavy flag-staff with banner in the principal right hand, while with his principal left hand he embraces his Śakti. He wears a five-peaked jewelled *mukuṭa, ratna-kuṇḍalas,* torque, wristlets, *pādāṅgadas* and long *mālā,* besides the lower garment fastened by jewelled belt. His Śakti also wears the usual apparel and is two-armed carrying *āliṅgana* and *abhaya.* They are seated on a lotus pedestal.

12. A god seated in loose *padamāsana* over a reclining human mount carrying a skull-cup. He wears a five-peaked *mukuṭa* and *patra-kuṇḍalas,* torque, wristlets, *pādāṅgadas* and long *mālā,* besides the lower garment fastened by jewelled belt, and carries in his hands *gadā,* peacock feathers, a four-footed animal and *āliṅgana.* His Śakti is two-armed carrying *āliṅgana* and vase-and-foliage and wearing the usual dress and ornaments.

13. Umā-Maheśvara as *āliṅgana-mūrti.* Maheśvara is represented as four-armed seated in *padmāsana* on a lotus seat with couchant Nandī below the seat looking up towards the god. He wears *jaṭā-mukuṭa* adorned by jewelled diadem, *sarpa-kuṇḍalas,* torque, *muṇḍa-mālā, sarpopavīta,* armlets, wristlets and *pādāṅgadas,* besides the lower garment. He carries in his hands *abhaya,* rosary, trident and *kalaśa*-cum-*āliṅgana.*

Umā is only two-armed carrying *ālingana* and *abhaya.* She wears the usual ornaments including the long garland besides a jacket and the usual lower garment.

14. Lakhmī-Nārāyaṇa as *āliṅgana-mūrti* seated in *lalitāsana.* Nārāyaṇa is four-armed and carries *padma, chakra, gadā* and *śaṅkha,* the lowest left hand being held in *āliṅgana.* He wears *kirīṭa-mukuṭa, ratna-kuṇḍalas,* torques, wristlets, *pādāṅgadas, vaijayantī-mālā* and lower garment fastened by *ratna-mekhalā.* He is seated on Garuḍa, represented as a bird with human hands. Lakshmī is two-armed carrying *āliṅgana* and *abhaya* and is seated on the lap of her lord over a lotus seat.

15. Three-headed, eight-armed, and four-legged god, standing together with his Śakti over a huge serpent. The main pair of legs on which the god stands are held apart, while the second pair is held in *ālīḍhāsana.* The god carries *goad, pāśa,* peacock feathers and a *khaṭvāṅga*-cum-*triśūla* in the right hands and axe, rosary, small spear and skull-cup in the left hands. His Śakti is two-armed and is represented standing in *tribhaṅga* with hands in *añjali.* The god and the goddess wear long *mālā.* The goddess is represented smiling, while one head of the god is depicted in the terrific aspect. This is Maheśamūrti of a Tāntric form represented with his Śakti.

16. The octagonal facet on the other side of the flight of steps starts with a six-faced and eight-armed god seated in *lalitāsana* on a human mount, which wears short curls resembling a wig. All the faces are of the boar with raised curls adorned by jewelled diadem. The god holds in his right hands *gadā,* arrow, *ḍamaru* and goad and in his left hands an elaborate bunch of flowers, bow, *pāśa* and *āliṅgana.* The god is pot-bellied and wears *patra-kuṇḍalas,* torques, *vaijayantī-mālā,* armlets, wristlets and *pādaṅgadas,* besides the usual lower garment.

His Śakti is two-armed embracing the god with the right hand, while her left hand is kept in *daṇḍa-hasta* over her left knee. She is seated in *lalitāsana* on the lap of her lord and wears a five-peaked *mukuṭa, patra-kuṇḍalas,* torque, *vaijayantī-mālā,* bangles and is draped in the usual lower garment.

This is a Tāntric form of Varāha with his Śakti.

17. Sixteen-armed Naṭarāja dancing in *ardhaparyaṅkāsana* with his left foot resting on couchant Nandī. The back-slab shows six figures of two-armed *gaṇas* (with bird or animal heads) arranged in a *maṇḍala*. Starting at 7 o'clock the *gaṇas* are seen playing respectively on a drum, small cymbals, and large cymbals, beating time with hands and playing on a bowl-like *(aṅkya)* drum. The top figure of the *maṇḍala* represents the skeletal figure of four-armed Bhṛiṅgī in the same dance-pose as his Lord. The pedestal shows centrally a a figure of two-armed dancer resembling Naṭarāja carrying *abhaya* and *tridaṇḍī,* flanked by a bird-headed and wolf-headed *gaṇa* on each side playing on a *bherī.* The main hands of the god are held in *abhaya* and *gaja-hasta* poses. The attributes of the three lower right hands are mutilated. The remaining right hands carry a *sruk, vajra-ghaṇṭā* and lotus flower and *ūrdhvahasta* dance pose. The left hands carry axe, trident, *ḍamaru, khaṭvāṅga,* bow, goad and a flower *(chintāmaṇi).* The god wears a five-peaked *mukuṭa, sarpa-kuṇḍalas,* torques, *muṇḍa-mālā,* wristlets, *pādāṅgadas,* bell-anklets and a lower garment, secured by a belt with three sets of tassels with pendant bells. Does the dancer on the pedestal represent Nandī in human form?

This is an elaborate form of Naṭarāja of a Tāntric variety encircled by musical *gaṇas.*

The *gaṇas* are all draped in full-sleeved tunics and skirt worn by the priests at Harasiddhi (on way to Godavari). While some *gaṇas* have the heads of boar; others have those of bull, bear, wolf or birds.

18. Sixteen-armed god of a terrific form with raised curls, bulging eyes and protruding side-tusks seated in loose *padmāsana* and riding on a pair of winged Garuḍas with folded human hands. The god carries in his main right hand peacock feathers and in the remaining ones *śaṅkha, vajra,* arrow, goad, rosary, small trident and *ghaṇṭā.* The left hands carry skull-cup, *mushṭika,* lotus flower, serpent, bow, bell with upper part resembling trident, small staff and book. The god wears *patra-kuṇḍalas,* torque, *muṇḍa-mālā,* wristlets, *pādāṅgadas* and the usual lower garment. His Śakti seated in *lalitāsana* on the lap of the god is eight-armed. Her main pair of hands carries the bowl and *vindu-mudrā.* The remaining right hands carry trident, *chakra* and sword. The remaining left hands carry shield, mirror and *pāśa.* She also wears *patra-kuṇḍalas,* torques, *muṇḍa-mālā,* bangles and lower garment secured by a jewelled belt.

This is a Tāntric form of god combining the attributes of Śiva and Vishṇu, with his Śakti.

19. The next octagonal facet starts with a ten-armed god seated in loose *padmāsana* on a couchant boar looking up towards the god. The Śakti of the god is seated in *lalitāsana* over a peacock represented as regardant. The god carries in his principal right hand indistinct *(vajra)* and in the remaining right hands a flower *(chintāmaṇi), vajra* with a standard, *ḍamaru* and *chakra.* The left hands carry peacock feathers, trident-cum-*khaṭvāṅga,* small *vīṇā,* small trident and *āliṅgana.* He wears *patra-kuṇḍalas,* torques, *ajinopavīta, muṇḍa-mālā,* armlets, wristlets and *pādāṅgadas,* besides a lower garment held by a *mekhalā* with bells attached. He has a terrific face with raised curls, bulging eyes and whiskers.

His Śakti seated on his lap in *lalitāsana* wears a five-peaked *mukuṭa* flanked on each side by a flag, *patra-kuṇḍalas,* torques, *muṇḍa-mālā,* wristlets and a lower garment with a frontal latticed apron. She is eight-armed carrying in the principal pair of hands the bowl and *vindu-mudrā.* The remaining left hands carry shield, lotus flowers and *pāśa.*

This may represent Kaumārī with her consort.

20. This represents a ten-armed god seated in loose *padmāsana* with a grinning but terrific face showing raised curls, bulging eyes and knit eye-brows. The forehead is marked by the third eye. These features are clearly visible as this figure is comparatively free from vermilion. He is seated on a lotus over a mount which resembles a leopard. He carries in his principal right hand a trident and in the remaining right hands *ḍamaru,* bow-shaped *pāśa,* serpent and *vajra.* The left hands carry *gadā,* rosary, bow and *tarjanī.* The fifth left hand embracing the Śakti is placed on her left shoulder. The god wears *patra-kuṇḍalas,* torques, *muṇḍa-mālā, ananta*-type armlets, wristlets and *pādāṅgadas,* besides a lower garment fastened by a jewelled belt with loops. The hair of the god is secured by a gold embroidered fillet with fan-shaped pleats at the two ends.

His Śakti is seated in *lalitāsana* on a couchant horse. She is eight-armed carrying in the principal pair of hands the bowl and the *vindu-mudrā.* The remaining right hands carry a small trident, *ḍamaru* (?) and sword. The remaining left hands carry a shield, *khaṭvāṅga,* and *pāśa.* She wears a five-peaked *mukuṭa* flanked by flags, *patra-kuṇḍalas,* torques, *muṇḍa-mālā,* bangles and the usual lower garment.

This is a Tāntric form of Śaiva deity of a terrific aspect.

21. A twelve-armed god seated in loose *padmāsana* on a lotus seat. His mount is a lion, while that of his Śakti is a *haṁsa.* The god has a terrific face with raised curls, bulging eyes, gaping mouth with exposed teeth and whiskers. He carries in his principal right hand the trident and in the other right hands the *kartari,* sword, serpent, goad and *abhaya.* The left hands carry a skull-cup, axe, peacock feathers, shield and *vajra.* His lowest left hand embraces his Śakti and is placed on her left shoulder. The god wears *patra-kuṇḍalas,* torques, armlets, wristlets, *muṇḍa-mālā, pādāṅgadas* and a lower garment of tiger-skin. The hair of the god is secured by a fillet studded with skulls. This feature is also present on other gods of ferocious aspect.

His Śakti wears a five-peaked *mukuṭa* flanked by flags, *patra-kuṇḍalas,* torque, bangles, *muṇḍa-mālā* and the usual lower garment. She is eight-armed and carries in the principal pair of hands the bowl and the *vindu-mudrā.* The remaining right hands carry trident, *ḍamaru* and sword. The left hands carry shield, book and *pāśa.*

This is a Tāntric form of Śaiva deity with Śakti.

22. The next octagonal facet shows seven-headed Gaṇeśa, the crowning head being human. He is seated in loose *padmāsana* on a lion mount and is ten-armed. His lowest right hand is placed in *varada,* the remaining right hands holding arrow, rosary, hammer and goad. His left hands carry *pāśa,* book, serpent and bowl of sweets. The lowest left hand of the god carrying a lotus flower embraces the Śakti and is placed on her waist. The god wears jewelled diadem on all the heads, torque, *sarpopavīta,* long garland, armlets, wristlets, and a lower garment with armoured bits on the fore-legs.

His Śakti resting on his lap is seated in *lalitāsana* on lotus. She is two-armed, her right hand held in *āliṅgana* and left in *abhaya.* She wears the usual dress and jewellery including a long garland.

This is a Tāntric form of Gaṇeśa with seven faces and his Śakti and lion mount.

23. This is an eight-faced (in four tiers) and sixteen-armed god standing in *ālīḍhāsana* with his right foot placed on a bull and left foot on a roaring lion. The lowest right hand of the god holds *varada,* the remaining right hands holding a *nara-muṇḍa,* axe, *ḍamaru,* trident, sword, trident-cum-*khaṭvāṅga* and a human victim. The left hands carry a flag-staff, *mudgara,* rosary, fly-whisk, lotus, monkey, *pāśa* and *abhaya.* Each head of the god wears a five-peaked *mukuṭa.* The main figure wears *sarpa-kuṇḍala* in the right ear and *patra-kuṇḍala* in the left, torques, garland of monkeys and squirrels, armlets, wristlets and a lower garment with a frontal latticed apron secured by a jewelled belt.

24. Umā seated in *padmāsana* suckling her child Skanda who is seated in her lap. She is four-armed. Her main right hand is placed on the right breast, the upper right hand carries *ḍamaru,* the upper left hand carries trident and the lower left supports the child. She wears a five-peaked *mukuṭa, patra-kuṇḍalas,* torques, long garland and wristlets. She wears a sari which also covers her belly and left shoulder in the *upavīta* fashion. The back slab depicts a *maṇḍala* of seven deities seated in *ardha-paryaṅkāsana* or *sukhāsana.* Four of them are four-armed, while the remaining are two-armed. They carry different attributes such as skull-cup, lotus flower, *varada, abhaya,* etc. The top figure is seated in *padmāsana* on a lion mount, and carries in the hands *varada,* goad, book and *abhaya.* It is difficult to say whether this figure is male or female. There is no doubt that the figures with one or two exceptions are male. All of them except one wear long garland. The pedestal shows *ashṭa-maṅgalas.*

LOWER ROW

The figures of the lower row are described anti-clockwise starting from the octagonal facet on the left flank of the steps :—

Lower 1.—The first octagonal facet shows only one figure in the central niche. The flanking niches are two-tiered and empty. The niche contains eighteen-armed Naṭarāja dancing in *ardha-pryaṅkāsana,* his left toes resting on the haunches of the couchant Nandī looking up. On the corresponding right side occurs a couchant lion. The top of the conical slab shows a miniature representation of similar Naṭarāja with similar bull and lion mounts but eight-armed only. He may represent Bhṛiṅgī. The principal right hand of the god is held in *abhaya,* while the remaining right hands carry trident, *kartari, vajra, chakra,* arrow, *ḍamaru* and sword. His uppermost right hand is held in *ūrdhva-hasta* pose. His main left hand is held in the *gajahasta* pose pointing towards his left foot. The remaining left hands carry shield, *khaṭvāṅga,* bow, a small staff, bell, skull-cup, *nara-muṇḍa* and *kamaṇḍalu.* The bull and the lion mounts are depicted above the lotus pedestal, which rest on a human corpse. The god wears *jaṭāmukuṭa* adorned below by five-peaked diadem, *sarpa-kuṇḍala* in the left ear, torque, *muṇḍa-mālā,* armlets, wristlets, ball-anklets and a lower garment with latticed apron. At the base of the slab is represented a frieze showing centrally dancing

Bhringī, flanked on each side by four musical *gaṇas,* some with heads of parrots and others of boar, wolf, etc. They play on *bherī,* drum, cymbals, bowl-like *(aṅkya)* drum, etc. One of them is beating time with the hands.

Lower 2.—Four-armed Bhairava standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on a human corpse and carrying *ḍamaru, vajra, triśūla* and *vīṇā.* He has a terrific face with raised curls, etc., and wears *patra-kuṇḍalas,* torque, *muṇḍa-mālā,* wristlets, *pādāṅgadas* and the usual type of lower garment. This is a form of Bhairava influenced by Tāntric Buddhism.

Lower 3.—Eighteen-armed Mahishāsura mardinī standing in *pratyālīḍhāsana* with her right foot placed on her lion mount and the left foot trampling on the back of the buffalo demon from whose decapitated head issues forth the demon in the human form wearing armour and carrying sword and shield in the upper pair of hands and *gadā* (?) and *pāśa* in the second pair. The main right hand of the goddess carries the tail-end of the *nāgā (nāga-pāśa)* as well as the *triśūla* with which she gores the chest of the demon, while she holds the demon's tuft with her main left hand. The remaining right hands of the goddess carry *kartari, vajra* (?), *chakra, ḍamaru, khaṭvāṅga,* double *vajra,* arrow and sword. The remaining left hands carry shield, bow, flag, *paraśu,* goad, *śaṅkha, ghaṇṭā,* and the tail-ends of the buffalo demon and the *nāga-pāśa.* She wears a five-peaked diadem flanked by flags, *patra-kuṇḍalas* torques, armoured jacket covering also the shoulders, pearl necklace of two strands with a central locket, armlets, bangles and bell-anklets, besides the lower garment with latticed apron in front secured by a jewelled belt with side tassels.

The lion mount stands on a lotus seat below which is represented centrally a pair of birds, flanked on each side by a male attendant. On the right end is a lion and on the left end is an animal resembling jackal, the vehicle of Chāmuṇḍā. On each extremity is represented a mailed *nāga* in human form. Behind each such *nāga* is represented a realistic *nāga* whose tail-end is held in the hands of Durgā. The *nāga* on the right carries a sword in one of the hands. Behind left hand *nāga* in human form is represented four-armed boar-headed Vārāhī carrying hammer and *triśūla* in the right hands and horn in the left hand. She rides on a reclining female figure.

The back-slab shows the nine Durgās, each represented as a four-armed deity seated in *pralambapādāsana.* The main pair of hands in each case carries the bowl and the *vindu-mudrā.* Clockwise from 7 o'clock onwards the first one (Māheśvarī) carries *ḍamaru* and *khaṭvaṅgā*-cum-*paraśu,* the second one (Vārāhī) with a boar's head carries lotus flower and goad. The third one (Vaishṇavī) carries *chakra* and arrows, while the fourth one (Brāhmī) carries rosary and book. The fifth or the top one is six-armed and carries bell and book in the remaining right hands and *sruk* and flask in the remaining left hands. The sixth one with sunken cheeks (Chāmuṇḍā) carries *ḍamaru* and *triśūla;* while the seventh one Kaumārī) carries staff. The eighth one (Indrāṇī) carries *vajra* and lotus flower, while the ninth or last one carries sword and shield.

Lower 4.—Eight-armed god standing facing in *ālīḍhāsana* with each foot resting on a peacock. His main pair of hands holds the bowl and the *vindu-mudrā* which is somewhat unusual for a god. The remaining right hands carry mutilated, *vīṇā* and sword. The left hands carry I-shaped shield, human victim and small trident. The god wears *kirīṭa-mukuṭa,*

ratna kuṇḍalas, torque, long garland, wristlets, *pādāṅgadas* and the usual lower garment. The god appears to represent Kumāra of a Tāntric form.

Lower 5.—Four-armed god standing in *pratyālīḍhāsana* with his right foot resting on lotus and left foot on the lion mount. He carries a goad, Śiva-liṅga, *pāśa* and skull-cup. He has raised curls with a terrific face, and wears *patra-kuṇḍalas,* torque, *muṇḍa-mālā,* wristlets, *pādāṅgadas* and the usual lower garment. He represents Bhairava.

The next octagonal facet shows three *maṇḍala*-shaped figure compositions.

Lower 6.—Lower 6 shows a group of three figures arranged in a conical form. The right lower figure represents eight-armed Chāmuṇḍā standing facing in *ālīḍhāsana.* She is flanked on each side by a dog and stands on a human corpse, resting on human skulls. Her main right hand carrying skull-cup is mutilated, while her main left hand is held up to her chin in the *tarjanī* pose. The top right hand carries *ḍamaru,* the remaining right hands being broken. The remaining left hands carry *khaṭvāṅga, abhaya* and *nara-muṇḍa.* She wears raised curls flanked by flags, *patra-kuṇḍalas,* torque, *muṇḍa-mālā,* armlets and bangles, besides a lower garment with a latticed apron. She has a skeletal frame with sagging breasts, sunken eyes and cheeks.

The left lower figure represents four-faced and twenty-armed Mahishāsuramardinī standing in *ālīḍhāsana* with her right foot resting on the lion mount. She carries in the principal pair of hands the bowl and the *vindu-mudrā* and in the next pair *ḍamaru* and *khaṭvāṅga.* The remaining right hands carry *triśūla* with which she gores the demon in human form, tuft of a warrior associate of the demon, goad, *śaṅkha,* lotus, *chakra,* arrow and sword. The remaining left hands hold shield, bow, staff, *vajra,* mirror, serpent, and tuft of a warrior associate of the demon. An armoured warrior is represented seated on either side, each drawing out a sword in support of their demon leader. Their tufts are held in the penultimate pair of hands of the goddess.

The top figure shows a seven-headed and sixteen-armed god standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on a lotus seat marked by a nude couple treated as mounts. The god wears a long garland and his Śakti who stands in *tribhaṅga* also wears the same. The lowest pair of the god's hands are held in *varada* and *abhaya,* while the top left hand carries *gadā.* The objects in other hands are too minute to be clearly visible.

Lower 7.—This is a *maṇḍala* with the principal god in the centre and eight gods on the periphery. The lowest on the periphery is flanked by two others making a total of ten. The principal god is six-faced and twelve-armed and seated on Garuḍa with a mutilated face. He carries in his right hands *varada,* arrow, *chakra,* double *vajra,* axe and sword and in the principal left hand a tall spear (śakti). His other left hands carry *triśūla,* goad, bell, serpent and bow. His six faces and the principal weapon viz. *śakti* indicate that the god may represent Kārttikeya, (compare a similar cult image under worship at Harigaon).

The peripheral figure at 6 o'clock represents a ten-armed and four-faced goddess (?) seated in *padmāsana* on tortoise. Her right hands hold *varada,* arrow, goad, *chakra* and trident, while the left hands hold *ḍamaru, kamaṇḍalu, pāśa,* bow and *abhaya.* She is flanked by a *nāgakanyā* on each side with hands folded. She probably represents Lakshmī.

Proceeding clock-wise the figure next to Lakshmī is a four-armed god seated in *padmāsana* on a reclining human figure carrying broken, sword, shield and broken. He has raised curls and wears *patra-kuṇḍalas,* torque and *muṇḍa-mālā.* He may represent Nirṛiti.

Peripheral figure 3 at 8 o'clock represents six-headed and twelve-armed god seated in *padmāsana* on a bull mount. He wears *muṇḍa-mālā* and carries in his right hands hammer, skull-cup, arrow, *chakra, śūla* and axe. Of the attributes of the left hands only *khaṭvāṅga* and bow can be made out. He may represent Iśāna.

Peripheral figure 4 at 10 o'clock is a six-headed and six-armed god seated on a stag. He also wears a *muṇḍa-mālā* and carries in the upper right hand peacock-feathers *(śakti)* and in the upper left hand a vase with flame-like foliage. He may represent Vāyu.

Peripheral figure 5 at 11 o'clock is a single-faced and eight-armed god seated in *padmāsana* on an elephant. He carries *abhaya,* rosary, goad and *vajra* in the right hands and peacock-feathers *(śakti),* trident, broken and *varada* in the left hands. He may represent Indra.

Peripheral figure 6 at 12 o'clock is a four-faced and eight-armed god seated in *padmāsana* on a bird which looks like a peacock but may represent a goose. He wears a *muṇḍa-mālā.* His right hands carry *vyākhyāna-mudrā, varada, sruk* and rosary. His left hands carry book and bowl, while the attributes of the two lower hands are broken. Does he represent Agni or Brahmā?

Peripheral figure 7 at 2 o'clock is a five-headed and twelve-armed god seated in *padmāsana* on the bull mount. His main pair of hands holding some object is placed against his chest. Some of his right hands carry *kartari* and axe, while some of his left hands carry trident and *vajra.* He wears a *muṇḍa-mālā.*

Peripheral figure 8 at 3 o'clock is a four-headed and eight-armed god seated in *padmāsana* on a reclining human figure. He wears a *muṇḍa-mālā* and carries in his right hands *śaṅkha,* trident, hammer and *ḍamaru* and in his upper left hand a *khaṭvāṅga.*

Peripheral figure at 4 o'clock is a three-headed and six-armed god seated in *padmāsana* without any mount. He wears a *muṇḍa-mālā.* His lowest right hand carries trident and the lowest left hand appears to carry *vajra*-shaped *śakti.*

Peripheral figure 10 at 5 o'clock appearing on the proper left flank of Lakshmī is two-armed Varuṇa seated in loose *padmāsana* on a crocodile. He carries *pāśa* in the left hand, while the object held in his right hand is indistinct. With the exception of Lakshmī, this is the only other figure which does not wear *muṇḍa-mālā* and dons instead a scarf *(uttarīya).*

It is not unlikely that this *maṇḍala* may represent the eight *dikpālās* of whom a few like Indra, Vāyu and Varuṇa can doubtlessly be recognized from their mounts.

Lower 8.—The main figure represents a six-armed god standing in *samabhaṅga* on a human carcass. The main pair of hands holds the bow and the *vindu-mudrā.* The remaining right hands carry *kartarī* and sword. The remaining left hands carry a blue lotus and *nara-muṇḍa.* He wears *muṇḍa-mālā* and a lower garment with a latticed apron. The figure is flanked on each side by a terrific monkey-headed four-armed god carrying *kartarī, ḍamaru, khaṭvāṅga* and bowl. The attendant god on the right stands in *pratyālīḍhāsana,*

while that on the left stands in *ālīḍhāsana* with raised curls and proudly tilted head. The pedestal shows three registers. The first shows four gods, each four-armed carrying *kartarī,* sword, shield and *kapāla* and separated respectively by an owl over cremation fire, cremation fire, serpent over cremation fire and elephant over cremation fire. The second register shows a boar, a jackal, a dog and an owl. The third register shows a frieze of *stūpas* alternating with Śiva-*liṅgas*. This is god Mahākāla, which is common to Buddhists and the Śaivas.

Lower 9.—This shows a six-armed goddess standing in *samabhaṅga* on a lion mount. She carries in her right hands *varada,* hammer *(mudgara)* and sword and in the left hands shield, mirror and *kaṭi*. She wears jewelled diadem flanked by flags, *patra-kuṇḍalas*' torque, lower garment with a latticed apron. She is flanked on each side by a smiling *gaṇa* with folded hands. While the right *gaṇa* wears *patra-kuṇḍalas,* the one on the left is Gajakarṇa with elephant's ears. Each dwarf wears a scarf and shorts.

The pedestal of this figure also shows three registers. The first register shows four-armed warrior gods carrying *kartarī,* sword, shield and skull-cup. In two cases, however, the attributes are slightly different. In one case the *kartarī* is replaced by an arrow, while in the other the main pair of hands carries the bowl and the *vindu-mudrā*. These warrior gods are mutually separated by cremation fire surmounted in three cases by a dog, a lion and a tree and in one case only by owl. The second register shows five niches containing figures of two lions, a jackal, a bird and a cock. The bottom register shows *stūpas* alternating with Śiva-*liṅgas*.

Lower 10.—This composition shows in the upper part a four-armed god seated in *padmāsana* with his Śakti on a common lotus seat resting on a large crescent. The god carries in his hands *varada,* vase-and-foliage, *chakra* or crescent (?) and *āliṅgana* and may represent Chandradeva. The Śakti seated in *lalitāsana* on the lap of her Lord is also four-armed carrying varada, *śaṅkha,* lotus flower or jewel and *abhaya.*

The middle register of this composition shows three goddesses standing in *ālīḍhāsana.* The central one stands on a garuḍa; the right one on nandī and the left one on a peacock. Each is four-armed and stands against the background of a tree. The principal pair of hands in each case holds the bowl and the *vindu-mudrā*. Only the attributes of the second pair of hands vary. The right one carries *ratna-mañjarī* and *triśūla*, the central one sword and *khaṭvāṅga* and the left one perhaps a staff and peacock feathers. They probably represent Māheśvarī, Vaishṇavī and Kaumārī. Each figure wears similar dress and ornaments including a *muṇḍa-mālā* and a lower garment with a latticed apron.

The bottom register shows a two-armed figure probably of Mahākāla seated in *padmāsana* on a human mount carrying a *kartarī* and skull-cup and flanked on each side by a *preta* in *ālīḍhāsana* carrying a *naramuṇḍa* and a skull-cup. Each figure of the bottom register wears a *muṇḍa-mālā*.

Lower 11.—This seems to represent four-armed Mahākāla standing facing in *ālīḍhāsana* with his right foot resting on a skull and the left foot on a human corpse about to be cremated. Two other cremations are shown below the figure of Mahākāla, a goblin issuing out of the one on the proper right. Though the head of the god is defaced, his raised

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curls are visible. He also wears *patra-kuṇḍalas,* torque, wristlets, *pādāṅgadas, muṇḍa-mālā* and a lower garment. The attributes of his principal pair of hands and the other left hands are broken, only the upper right hand carrying the sword is intact. The back-slab shows a frame of human skulls with a border of flames.

Lower 12.—Five-headed and ten-armed god standing facing in *ālīḍhāsana* with his feet resting on a pair of lions. His two-armed Śakti stands in *tribhaṅga* on a lotus seat reclining against his left shoulder. The god carries in his right hands broken, mutilated vajra, *khaṭvāṅga,* peacock feathers and a large trident pierced with the figure of an armoured warrior carrying sword and shield. Most of the god's left hands are mutilated with their arrtibutes. Only *ḍamaru,* serpent and rosary can be made out. The halo is surmounted by four-armed Vidyādhara figures carrying garlands and emerging from the clouds which are clearly depicted. The god and his Śakti wear *muṇḍa-mālā* and lower garments with latticed apron in front. The god also wears *sarpa-kuṇḍalas.*

Lower 13.—Sixteen-armed Gaṇeśa seated in *ālīḍhāsana* with his Śakti, canopied by a serpent with two tiers of 7 and 5 hoods respectively. The main right hand of Gaṇeśa holds one of his tusks, while the other right hands carry *varada,* rosary, *chakra,* hammer, axe, trident and sword. The left hands carry shield, hammer, *triśūla*-cum-*khaṭvāṅga, pāśa,* peacock feathers, book and vessel, while his lowest left hand carrying sweets embraces his Śakti. The Śakti is only two-armed carrying *abhaya* and *varada.* Both of them wear the usual dress with the long garland, while Gaṇeśa also wears armoured bits on the fore-legs. Below Gaṇeśa is represented a pair of mice as his mount. In the background are carved trees, while the pedestal is carved with lions to indicate that it is a *siṁhāsana.*

Lower 14.—Six-faced and eight-armed god standing facing in *ālīḍhāsana* with his three-faced and four-armed Śakti dancing in *ardhaparyaṅkāsana.* Both of them stand on a human corpse. The main right hand of the god is held in *abhaya.* His remaining right hands carry *khaṭvāṅga, ḍamaru* and serpent. His left hands carry *kartarī,* axe, trident and skullcup. The god wears *muṇḍa-mālā* and a lower garment with a latticed apron. The main hands of the Śakti hold the bowl and the *vindu-mudrā.* The other right hand is broken, while the left hand carries goad.

Lower 15.—Five-headed and ten-armed Gaṇeśa facing front and standing in *ālīḍhāsana* with each foot placed on a lion mount. The principal right hand of Gaṇeśa carries a rosary. The other right hands carry *varada,* hammer, axe and sword. His main left hand carries a bowl of sweets which the god is partaking with his trunk. His other left hands carry shield, *pāśa,* goad and *abhaya.* The god wears torque, wristlets, long garland and lower garment with armoured bits on his fore-legs.

Lower 16.—Eleven-headed and eighteen-armed Mahākāla dancing in *ardhaparyaṅkāsana* with his left foot resting on a cremation fire. His main right hand is held up in the *ūrdhvahasta* pose, while his main left hand is held in the *gajahasta* pose. His remaining right hands carry radish, skull-cup, serpent, *khaṭvāṅga,* hammer, double *vajra,* trident and sword. His left hands carry a human victim, goad, *ḍamaru, vajra, gadā,* lotus flower or jewel, serpent, and rosary. His Śakti standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on a *siṁhāsana* is four-armed, carrying *kartarīs,* sword, *nara-muṇḍa* and *kapāla.* On the right of the god is represented a four-armed goddess

seated in *ardha-paryaṅkāsana* beating time with the main pair of hands and carrying *ḍamaru* and *khaṭvāṅga* in the other pair. The back-slab is framed all round by human skulls with a border of flames. A pair of owls with jackal and wolf at the two ends is carved on the pedestal. The god and his Śakti wear *muṇḍa-mālā* and a lower garment with a latticed apron.

Lower 17.—Five-headed and ten-armed god facing front and standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on a human corpse. He carries in his right hands human victim, *vajra,* bell and sword. The left hands carry peacock feathers, bow and arrow, human head, *khaṭvāṅga* and skull-cup. This figure also wears *muṇḍa-mālā* and a lower garment with a latticed apron.

Lower 18.—Eight-armed god with a terrific face standing facing in *ālīḍhāsana* on a human corpse. His right hands hold *varada, ḍamaru, triśūla* and sword, while his left hands hold *triśūla*-cum-*khaṭvāṅga, pāśa,* indistinct and serpent. He has raised curls and wears *muṇḍa-mālā* and a lower garment with a latticed apron.

Lower 19.—Six-headed and twelve-armed goddess standing facing in *ālīḍhāsana* with her right foot placed on Garuḍa with hands in *añjali* and left foot resting on the hump of a bull looking up. The right hands of the goddess hold *varada,* bell, lotus flower, *gadā, śaṅkha* and *chakra.* Her principal left hand is held in *abhaya,* while the remaining left hands are broken. She wears a *muṇḍa-mālā* and a lower garment with a latticed apron. She is the female counterpart of Hari-Hara in the Tāntric aspect.

Lower 20.—Eighteen-armed goddess dancing in *ardhaparyaṅkāsana* with her right foot on the lion mount. Her principal pair of hands carries the bowl in the right hand and peacock feathers-cum-*vindu-mudrā* in the left hand, the second pair carries *vajra* and *ghaṇṭā.* The remaining right hands carry rosary, goad, *triśūla,* axe, *chakra,* arrow and sword. The remaining left hands carry shield, bow, *gadā, nara-muṇḍa, khaṭvaṅga, śaṅkha* and vase. She wears jewelled diadem flanked by flags, *śaṅkha-kuṇḍalas,* torque, *muṇḍa-mālā,* wristlets, bangles, bell-anklets and a lower garment with a latticed apron. She is flanked on the right by twelve-armed Chāmuṇḍā seated in *pralambapādāsana* in the European fashion carrying a serpent (which she is devouring) and bowl in the principal pair of hands. The remaining right hands of Chāmuṇḍā carry *kartarī,* human victim, indistinct, arrow and sword. Her remaining left hands carry shield, bow, *khaṭvāṅga,* etc. She is seated on a human corpse which rests on two tiers of human skulls.

The principal goddess is flanked on the left by an eighteen-armed goddess seated in *pralambapādāsana.* Her principal pair of hands carries the bowl and the *vindu-mudrā.* The sword is clearly visible in her uppermost right hand and the shield in her uppermost left hand. She also wears a *muṇḍa-mālā.*

The back-slab is framed by human skulls with a border of flames.

Lower 21.—Six-faced and ten-armed Narasiṁha seated in *ardhaparyaṅkāsana* on a pair of human mounts. The god carries in his right hands *varada*-cum-*akshamālā,* lotus, *gadā, śaṅkha* and *chakra.* He holds in the left hands a flag, hala, a bowl of sweets, bunch of flowers and *āliṅgana,* his lowest left hand resting on the left shoulder of his Śakti, who is seated in *lalitāsana* in the lap of her lord. She is two-armed holding *āliṅgana* and bowl. In the upper field is represented a mutilated figure of Śiva-Pārvatī as *āliṅgana-mūrti* seated respectively on the bull and lion mounts.

On each side-wall of the flight of steps is a niche. In the eastern niche is an image of two-armed god seated in loose *padmāsana* carrying sword and a bunch of flowers. The god is corpulent and wears jewelled *mukuṭa*. *ratna-kuṇḍalas,* torque, wristlets, a long *mālā* and the usual lower garment. In the western niche is a four-armed image of god standing on an animal which may be a buffalo or stag. He has only one leg and stands on his right foot. Another peculiarity of the image is that a four-armed god emerges from either side of his waist, with the upper pair of hands folded above the head. While the objects held in the lower pair of hands of the right hand figure are indistinct, the left hand figure carries *śaṅkha* and book. The main god holds bowl, *triśūla,* goad and *varada* in the hands, and wears *mukuṭa* adorned by jewels with a conical object resembling *dhatūrā* flowers projecting from the right, *sarpa-kuṇḍalas*, torque, garland, *muṇḍa-mālā, pādāṅgadas* and lower garment fastened by a jewelled belt. This figure probably represents Śiva as Ekapāda.

From the south-western end the uppermost circle shows :

1) Eighteen-armed god standing in *pratyālīḍhāsana,* on the legs of a seated nude ascetic facing the god; with the main pair of hands pressing down the head of the ascetic. The next pair of hands holds *chakra* and *gadā.* The remaining right hands carry *vajra,* goad, a *khukri*-like sword, arrow, umbrella-like *dhvaja, ḍamaru* and *triśūla.* The remaining left hands carry *khaṭvāṅga, mushṭi,* lotus flower, bow, shield, *pāśa* and probably peacock feathers *(śakti).* The god is flanked on the right by three-headed and four-armed Mahishāsuramardinī killing the buffalo demon in full animal form with *triśūla* held in her lower right hand. The upper left hand is held in *abhaya,* while there is no trace of the lower left hand. The corresponding figure on the left is six-armed *Vārāhī* standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on a pair of nude human figures. In her lowest left and right hands she carries the tufts of her human mounts. The other hands carry *śaṅkha, chakra, gadā* and *padma.* The main god wears jewelled *mukuṭa, patra-kuṇḍalas,* torque, wristlets, *muṇḍa-mālā, pādāṅgadas,* scarf and a lower garment of tiger skin.

2) Two-armed god carrying sword and the reins and riding a horse. He wears jewelled *mukuṭa, patra-kuṇḍalas,* torque, wristlets and *vaijayantī-mālā.*

3) Five-headed and eighteen-armed god seated in loose *padmāsana* on a pair of reclining human figures each carrying a skull-cup. The pedestal shows a pair of bulls flanking a two-armed seated figure with the right hand held in *abhaya.* The main pair of hands of the god carries *khaṭvāṅga* and *nara-muṇḍa.* The second pair carries arrow and bow. The remaining right hands carry *varada,* hammer, chisel, *triśūla, ḍamaru,* goad and sword. The remaining left hands carry shield, *pāśa,* flag standard crowned by a club, axe, flower and *abhaya.* The god wears jewelled *mukuṭa, ratna-kuṇḍalas,* torque, wristlets, *pādāṅgadas,* a long *mālā* and a lower garment fastened by jewelled belt.

4) Two-armed Nāgaraja seated in loose *padmāsana* under the canopy of numerous serpent hoods. His seat and back-rest are also made of beautifully arranged serpent coils. He is flanked on each side by a two-armed Nāgī with hands in *añjali* on whose coils he sits. He is two-armed carrying *varada* and lotus flower in the right hand and *kalaśa* in the left hand. He wears jewelled *mukuṭa, ratna-kuṇḍalas,* torque, *hāra,* long *mālā,* armlets, wristlets, *pādāṅgadas* and lower garment fastened by a jewelled belt.

5) Same as number 4 (Nāgarāja).

6) Same as number 4 with the difference that the right hand is held in *abhaya* (represents Nāgarāja).

7) Lakshmī-Nārāyaṇa seated on lotus seat resting on Garuḍa represented realistically as a bird. Nārāyaṇa is four-armed but only his lowest left hand carrying vase and holding Lakshmī in embrace is intact. Lakshmī is two-armed carrying *āliṅgana* and indistinct. Her face is completely mutilated. Nārāyaṇa sits in loose *padmāsana,* while Lakshmī is seated in *lalitāsana.* Nārāyaṇa wears jewelled *mukuṭa, ratna-kuṇḍalas,* torque, *vaijayantī-mālā, pādāṅgada* and flower garment fastened by a jewelled belt.

8) This is a repetition of number 6 (Nāgarāja).

9) Śiva-Pārvatī each seated in *lalitāsana* on a common lotus seat. Śiva is four-armed carrying *varada, triśūla, triśūla* and *abhaya.* Pārvatī carries blue lotus and *abhaya.* Śiva wears *jaṭāmukuṭa, kuṇḍalas* and wristlets of snakes, torque, *ratnopovīta, muṇḍa-mālā, pādāṅgadas* and a lower garment fastened by a jewelled belt.

10) Eight-armed Krishṇa standing in *tribhaṅga* in his characteristic pose holding a flute in the main pair of hands. The remaining hands carry five arrows, goad and *chakra* in the right hands and *śaṅkha, pāśa* and bow in the left hands. He is flanked by a four-armed Gopī on each side, the right one carrying flowers in the lower right hand, the upper right hand held up in *ūrdhvahasta* dance pose, while the left hands carry a book and a bowl of flowers. The Gopī on the left is in *ālīḍhāsana* and carries rosary, *abhaya,* book and a flower. Krishṇa wears jewelled *mukuṭa, ratna-kuṇḍalas,* torque, *vaijayantīmālā,* armlets, wristlets, *pādāṅgadas,* a lower garment fastened by a jewelled belt. He stands under a canopy of seven hoods, reminding of his aspect as *Kāliya-damana.*

11) Kāmadeva seated in loose *padmāsana* with his two consorts Rati and Prīti seated on his lap on either side. Kāmadeva is four-armed and carries arrows, flag, fish and bow made of sugarcane, with its string made of flowers. His consorts are two-armed, the right one carrying *abhaya* and bowl and the left one carrying flower and broken. The god wears a conical *mukuṭa* of flowers, *ratna-kuṇḍalas,* torque, wristlets, *pādāṅgadas* and a lower garment fastened by a jewelled belt.

12) Four-armed goddess seated in *padmāsana* carrying *varada,* lotus, vase and *abhaya.* She wears jewelled *mukuṭa, ratna-kuṇḍalas,* torque, wristlets and long *mālā.*

13) It is a small shrine-type niche. The image is missing.

14) The next half of the circle starts with number 14. This shows four-armed goddess seated on lotus in *lalitāsana* carrying *varada,* sword (broken), flowers and *abhaya.* She wears jewelled *mukuṭa, ratna-kuṇḍalas,* torque, wristlets and long *mālā.*

15) Five-headed and sixteen-armed god seated in *lalitāsana* on winged Garuḍa in human form. The three lower heads have raised curls adorned by jewelled *mukuṭa,* while the two crowning heads wear jewelled *mukuṭa.* The god also wears torque, armlets, wristlets, scarf, *yogapaṭṭa, pādāṅgadas* and lower garment. The four-armed Śakti of the god is seated on his lap. The principal head of the god is of lion (Narasiṁha). The lower left head is of Varāha and the lower right of Garuḍa. The two surmounting heads are human. The main right hand of the god carries a flower. His remaining right hands carry *varada,* goad,

vajra, lotus, *kartarī*, arrow and sword. His left hands carry shield, bow, *gadā*, *śaṅkha*, lotus flower, hammer, *abhaya* and probably *āliṅgana*, the last hand being indistinct. His Śakti carries *abhaya*, bunch of flowers, vase-and-foliage and *varada*. Below the *siṁhāsana* of the image is represented a reclining warrior (some demon) holding a sword and shield and wearing an armoured coat.

This is a peculiar five-headed form of Vishṇu with prominence given to his form as Narasiṁha. Does his bird-head refer to Garuḍa?

16) Ten-armed Bhairava standing in *pratyālīḍhāsana* with his right foot placed on a human corpse and the left foot on a serpent. He carries the bowl and *vindu-mudrā* in the main pair of hands, his remaining right hands carry *varada*, *ḍamaru*, *vajra* and sword; his remaining left hands carry *khaṭvāṅga*, *pāśa*, *nara-muṇḍa* and *abhaya*. He is shown as *ūrdhvaretas* and has a terrific appearance with raised curls secured by a fillet with skull-clasps, bulging eyes, open whiskered mouth, *sarpa-kuṇḍalas, sarpa-hāra, sarpa-valaya* for the wrists and anklets, torque, *muṇḍa-mālā*, bell-anklets and lower garment of tiger-skin fastened by a jewelled belt.

17) Two-armed god standing in *pratyālīḍhāsana* carrying *kalpa*-tree in the right hand and vase-and-foliage in the left hand. He wears jewelled *mukuṭa* etc. including long *mālā*.

18) This is a repetition of figure 6 (Nāgarāja).

19) Four-armed Sūrya seated in loose *padmāsana* on a lotus seat which is marked by a winged horse. The god carries *abhaya*, lotus flower, while his left hand embracing the Śakti is held in *varada*. His Śakti is four-armed and seated in *lalitāsana*. Her main pair of hands is held in *añjali*; the remaining hands carrying lotus-bud and *kalaśa*.

20 to 22) 20 and 22 are repetitions of figure 6, while 21 is a repetition of figure 4 (images of Nāgarāja).

23) Eighteen-armed goddess seated with her knees tied with *yogapaṭṭa*. She is seated on a pair of fish which rests on a large skull-cup flanked on each side by a serpent. The serpents are flanked on the lower ground by two-armed kneeling attendants carrying *gadā* and *chakra*. The goddess carries the bowl and the *vindu-mudrā* in the main pair of hands. The second pair carries *ḍamaru* and *khaṭvāṅga*. The next pair carries the tails of the flanking serpents. The remaining right hands hold *varada*, stick with a square top, hammer, *vajra*, *triśūla* and sword. The remaining left hands carry shield, goad, human head, *khaṭvāṅga*, water-vessel and *abhaya*. The goddess wears jewelled *mukuṭa* flanked by flags, *patra-kuṇḍalas*, torque, wristlets, *muṇḍa-mālā* and lower garment besides the *yogapaṭṭa*.

24) Four-armed Kumāra seated in *lalitāsana* with his right foot resting on peacock and left knee resting on lotus flower. His hands carry *abhaya*, peacock feathers (śakti), cock and bow. He wears jewelled mukuṭa, *ratna-kuṇḍalas*, torque, armlets, wristlets and lower garment with central apron. True to the local tradition which depicts him in a terrific form, he wears *muṇḍa-mālā*. So also does his Śakti who is shown as four-armed, carrying *abhaya, āliṅgana*, cock and *nara-muṇḍa*. The artist here has combined the terrific forms of Kumāra and Kaumārī who is one of the nine Durgās. She wears jewelled *mukuṭa*, *ratna-kuṇḍalas*, torque, armlets, wristlets, *muṇḍa-mālā* and lower garment with a central apron. She is seated in *lalitāsana* with her left foot resting on a human mount carrying skull-cup in the left hand.

25) Lastly, a two-armed militant goddess carrying serpent in each hand stands in *pratyālīḍhāsana* and attacks an armoured warrior carrying *gadā* and shield. The victim has been floored. The goddess wears *kirīṭa-mukuṭa, patra-kuṇḍalas*, torque, bangles, armour, scarf, bell-anklets and lower garment of skirt and is flanked on each side by a two-armed grinning *preta* (goblin).

BRAHMANICAL TĀNTRIC IMAGES IN SADĀŚIVA (BHAIRAVA) CHOWK

Sadāśiva Chowk, also known as Bhairava Chowk is an integral part of the royal palace complex at Bhaktapur. It was built by king Nareśamalla (AD 1637-1644) who was himself an expert on Tāntric studies. This has seventeen Tāntric figures of Bhairava besides a figure each of Durgā, Gaṇeśa and Kumāra, also of the Tāntric variety. All of them are shown as twelve-armed and stand in *ālīḍhāsana* on their respective mounts. Of the seventeen Bhairava figures fifteen are represented as Gajāsuravadhamūrti, as is indicated by the elephant hide held in their uppermost pair of hands. The Bhairava figures also show a variety of mounts, two figures each having horse, peacock, goose, and human mounts, and one each having a dog, bull, owl, cock, wolf, jackal, goat, Garuḍa and a pair of parrots as mounts.

1. Twelve-armed blue-coloured Bhairava standing in *pratyālīḍhāsana* on a human mount carrying skull-cup. The main pair of hands carries the bowl and *vindu-mudrā*. The remaining right hands carry *kartarī, vajra,* arrow, *ḍamaru* and sword. The remaining left hands carry shield, bowl, ball, *triśūla* and human head.

2. Twelve-armed Durgā standing in *ālīḍhāsana* with the lion mount below her feet. She carries bowl and *vindu-mudrā* in the principal pair of hands. The remaining right hands carry *varada, vajra,* arrow, sword and *ḍamaru*. The remaining left hands carry shield, bow, bell, *abhaya* and *khaṭvāṅga*.

North side

3. Red-coloured twelve-armed Bhairava standing in *pratyālīḍhāsana* on a human mount. The raised curls are adorned by the crescent and skull. He carries in the principal pair of hands arrow and bow. The uppermost pair of hands carries *gaja-charma* (the hide of *Gajāsura*). The remaining right hands carry *vajra, kartarī*, sword and *ḍamaru*. The remaining left hands carry shield, *nara-muṇḍa,* bell and skull cup.

4. Red-coloured twelve-armed Bhairava standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on a dog mount. The right hands carry *tripatākā-mudrā*, fish, *kartrī*, arrow and sword. The left hands carry shield, bow, *nara-muṇḍa*, goad and skull-cup. They all wear *sarpa-kuṇḍalas*, *sarpa-valayas* at the wrists and anklets, *muṇḍa-mālā*, torque and tiger skin as lower garment.

5. Blue-coloured twelve-armed Bhairava standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on a bull mount. The uppermost pair of hands carries *gaja-charma* (the hide of *Gajāsura*). The other right hands carry *ḍamaru*, goad, *kartarī*, arrow and small staff. The other left hands carry shield, bow, *pāśa,* skull-cup and *triśūla*.

6. Blue-coloured twelve-armed Bhairava standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on a horse mount. The uppermost pair of hands carries *gaja-charma* (the hide of *Gajāsura*). The other right hands carry *kartarī*, arrow, *chakra*, *vajra* and sword. The remaining left hands carry shield, *gadā*, bow, bell and *nara-muṇḍa*.

7. Red-coloured twelve-armed Bhairava standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on a peacock mount. The uppermost pair of hands carry *gaja-charma* (the hide of *Gajāsura*). The other right hands carry *kartarī*, spear, goad, arrow and sword. The remaining left hands carry shield, bow, *pāśa*, peacock feathers and skull-cup.

West Side

8. Green-coloured twelve-armed Bhairava standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on a white goose. The uppermost pair of hands carries *gaja-charma* (the hide of *Gajāsura*). The other right hands carry *karaṇa-mudrā*, *vajra*, *kartarī*, sword and stag. The remaining left hands carry shield, *nara-muṇḍa*, bell, skull-cup and serpent.

9. Yellow-coloured twelve-armed Bhairava standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on an owl mount. The principal pair of hands carries *kartarī* and *kalaśa*. The uppermost pair of hands carries *gaja-charma* (the hide of *Gajāsura*). The remaining right hands carry *varada*, arrow, *vajra* and sword. The remaining left hands carry shield, *pāśa*, bow and *abhaya*.

10. White or yellow-coloured twelve-armed Bhairava standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on a cock mount. The main pair of hands carries *kartarī* and *kapāla*. The uppermost pair of hands carries *gaja-charma* (the hide of *Gajāsura*). The remaining right hands carry arrow, goad, *chakra*, and sword. The remaining left hands carry shield, crescent, *pāśa* and bow.

11. Red-coloured twelve-armed Bhairava standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on a horse mount. The first pair of hands carries arrow and bow. The second pair carries spear and skull-cup. The uppermost pair of hands carries *gaja-charma* (the hide of *Gajāsura*). The remaining right hands carry hammer, *vajra* and sword. The remaining left hands carry shield, bell and fire.

12. Yellow-coloured twelve-armed Bhairava standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on a wolf mount. The main pair of hands carries *kartarī* and *kapāla*. The second pair carries *ḍamaru* and *khaṭvāṅga*. The uppermost pair of hands carries *gaja-charma* (the hide of *Gajāsura*). The remaining right hands carry *vajra*, arrow and sword. The remaining left hands carry shield, bow and bell.

13. Blue-coloured twelve-armed Bhairava standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on a jackal mount. The main pair of hands carries *kartarī* and *nara-muṇḍa*. The second pair carries dumb-bell-like object and *khaṭvāṅga*. The uppermost pair of hands carries *gaja-charma* (the hide of *Gajāsura*). The remaining right hands carry arrow, sword and *vajra*. The remaining left hands carry bell, shield and bow.

14. Yellow-coloured twelve-armed Bhairava standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on a goat mount. The first pair of hands carries goad and *pāśa*. The second pair carries Śakti (resembling peacock feathers) and skull-cup. The uppermost pair of hands carries *gaja-charma* (the hide of *Gajāsura*). The remaining right hands carry arrow, *vajra* and sword. The remaining left hands carry shield, bell and bow.

South Side

15. Red-coloured twelve-armed Bhairava standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on a peacock mount. The first pair of hands carries *kartarī* and *kapāla.* The second pair carries *ḍamaru* and *khaṭvāṅga.* The uppermost pair of hands carries *gaja-charma* (the hide of *Gajāsura*). The remaining right hands carry peacock feathers, sword and goad. The remaining left hands carry *pāśa,* shield and flag.

16. Yellow-coloured twelve-armed Bhairava standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on a white goose. The uppermost pair of hands carries *gaja-charma* (the hide of *Gajāsura*). The other right hands carry goad, *vajra, kartari,* sword and broken (probably spear). The remaining left hands carry I-shaped shield, circular shield, *ḍamaru, pāśa* and *kapāla.*

17. Green-coloured twelve-armed Bhairava within grated enclosure on Garuḍa. The principal pair of hands carries arrow and bow. The second pair carries *kartarī* and *kapāla.* The uppermost pair of hands carries *gaja-charma* (the hide of *Gajāsura*). The right hands carry *chakra,* sword and *vajra.* The remaining left hands carry bell, shield and *gadā.*

18. Red-coloured twelve-armed Bhairava standing in *ālīḍhāsana.* A pair of parrots are depicted as mounts. The main pair of hands carries *kartarī* and *kapāla.* The second pair carries *ḍamaru* (?) and *khaṭvāṅga.* The uppermost pair of hands carries *gaja-charma* (the hide of *Gajāsura*). The remaining right hands carry goad, *vajra* and sword. The remaining left hands carry *tarjanī,* small *triśūla* and *pāśa.*

19. Twelve-armed Gaṇeśa standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on a mouse. The main pair of hands carries *karaṇa-mudrā* and bowl of sweets. The second pair carries *triśūla* and *paraśu.* The remaining right hands carry goad, rosary, arrow and sword. The remaining left hands carry shield, bow, book and *pāśa.*

East

20. There is only one figure within the grated enclosure on the east showing twelve-armed Kumāra standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on a peacock. The main pair of hands carries bowl and *vindu-mudrā* and the second pair carries *tarjanī* and *khaṭvāṅga.* The remaining right hands carry *varada,* rosary, peacock feathers and sword. The remaining left hands carry shield, flag, book and *abhaya.*

BRAHMANICAL TANTRIC IMAGES IN KUMARI CHOWK, BHAKTAPUR

The northern verandah of the Kumari Chowk is enclosed on three sides and has a low roof about 6′ high. Three sides of the verandah are decorated with three rows of relief figures of gods and goddesses. All of them are inscribed in Sanskrit verses.

Top row

Western face

1. Four-armed Gaṇeśa seated in *lalitāsana* on a mouse which actually looks like an animal. His *Śakti* is seated on his lap in *pralambapādāsana.* Gaṇeśa carries *varada*, rosary, axe and sweets, the lower left hand being held in *āliṅgana.* His Śakti carries *āliṅgana* and bowl full of sweets which the god is partaking with his trunk.

2. Four-armed goddess Durgā seated on lion carrying *varada,* rosary, lotus flower and *triśūla.* Inscribed *Siṁhavāhinī.*

3. Four-armed goddess seated on lotus carrying rosary, *śakti,* blue lotus and *vījapūraka.* In the inscription the upper left hand is said to hold blue lotus and the lower left hand *vījapūra.*

4. Four-armed goddess seated in *lalitāsana* on Nandī carrying *varada, ḍamaru, triśūla* and serpent. Called in the inscription *Śailendra-sundarī.*

5. Four-armed goddess seated in *lalitāsana* on a swan carrying *sruk,* rosary, deer skin and *gadā.*

6. Four-armed goddess seated in *lalitāsana* on a lotus carrying *varada,* arrow, bow and *abhaya.*

7. Four-armed goddess seated in *lalitāsana* on elephant carrying *varada, vajra,* goad and *abhaya.* She is clearly Indrāṇi, although not so mentioned in the inscription.

8. Four-armed goddess seated in *lalitāsana* on crocodile. She carries *varada*-cum-rosary, goad, *pāśa* and *chāmara.*

9. Four-armed goddess seated in *lalitāsana* on a stag. She plays on *vīṇā* with the main pair of hands and carries rosary and *dhvaja* (flag).

Northern face

10. Four-armed goddess seated in *lalitāsana* on a lion carrying *varada,* skull-cup, casket for *sindūra* and *abhaya.*

11. Four-armed goddess seated in *lalitāsana* on an owl *(kauśika)* carrying *varada, triśūla, nara-muṇḍa* and *kartarī.* Labelled Nagendra-nandinī.

12. Four-armed goddess seated in *lalitāsana* on a lotus carrying *varada,* lotus flower, *chakra* and *abhaya.*

13. Four-armed goddess seated in *lalitāsana* on Nandī carrying *varada,* rosary, *kamaṇḍalu,* and *abhaya.* Inscribed Bhavānī.

14. Four-armed goddess seated in *lalitāsana* on an elephant carrying *varada,* rosary, *kamaṇḍalu* and *abhaya.*

15. Four-armed goddess Sarasvatī (not labelled) seated in *lalitāsana* on a lotus flower. She plays on *vīṇā* with the main pair of hands and carries *abhaya* in the upper right hand while her lower left hand is placed on the seat.

16. Four-armed goddess seated in *lalitāsana* on a lotus flower carrying *varada, sruk,* deer skin and *abhaya.* Inscribed Jagadīśvarī.

17. Four-armed Durgā seated in *lalitāsana* on the buffalo demon from whose decapitated head issues the demon as a warrior drawing out the sword. The goddess is represented as an archer and holds arrow in the lower right hand. The remaining hands carry sword, shield and bow. The inscription mentions that she carries arrow in one of the hands. Labelled Bhavānī.

18. Four-armed goddess seated in *lalitāsana* carrying *varada,* garland, mirror and *abhaya.* She is seated on a lotus stalk.

19. Four-armed goddess seated in *lalitāsana* on a lotus stalk carrying *varada,* lotus flower, *kamaṇḍalu* and *abhaya.* Labelled Umā.

20. Four-armed goddess seated in *lalitāsana* on a lotus flower carrying *varada,* śakti, deer skin and *abhaya.* Inscribed Mahālakshmī.

21. Four-armed goddess seated in *padmāsana* on a lotus flower carrying *varada,* rosary, *vījapūraka* and *abhaya.* Inscribed Bhavānī.

22. Four-armed goddess seated in *lalitāsana* on a lotus flower. She plays on *vīṇā* with the main pair of hands and carries *varada* and *abhaya.*

23. Four-armed goddess seated in *lalitāsana* on a lotus flower. She plays on *vīṇā* with the main pair of hands and carries *varada* and *abhaya.* Inscribed Bhavānī.

24. Four-armed goddess seated in *lalitāsana* on a full vase flanked by two lotuses. She carries *varada*-cum-rosary, *pāśa,* goad and lotus flower. Inscribed Lakshmī.

25. This is the main figure coming immediately above the main image of Durgā which appears in the centre of the middle row. The god is five-headed and ten-armed standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on a reclining human figure carrying skull-cup. The main head is of Hanumān. The feet are also of Hanumān. On the left is the head of a boar, while on the right are heads of wolf and Garuḍa. The crowning head is of a horse. The main right hand carries *triśūla.* The remaining right hands carry *kartarī, pāśa, vajraghaṇṭā* and sword. The left hands carry *gadā,* skull-cup, rosary, *hala* and *tarjanī.*

26. Four-armed goddess seated in *lalitāsana* on a horse carrying *varada,* sword, shield and hammer. The hammer is called *musala* in the inscription.

27. Four-armed goddess seated in *lalitāsana* on lotus carrying skull-cup, lotus, lotus buds and full vase. She is called Guha-mātā in the inscription.

28. Four-armed goddess seated in *lalitāsana* on a bull carrying *varada,* rosary, *kamaṇḍalu* and *pāśa.* Inscribed Bhavānī.

29. Four-armed goddess seated in *lalitāsana* on a lotus flower carrying *varada,* skull-cup, blue lotus and *abhaya.* Inscribed Girijā.

30. Four-armed goddess seated in *padmāsana* on a lotus carrying *varada, śaṅkha,* book and *abhaya.* She is called Bhāvānī.

31. Four-armed goddess seated in *lalitāsana* on a lotus carrying *varada, kartarī,* human head and *abhaya.* Inscribed Bhavānī.

32. Four-armed goddess seated in *lalitāsana* on a lotus flower carrying *varada,* skull-cup, *triśūla* and *abhaya.*

33. Four-armed goddess seated in *lalitāsana* on a lotus stalk carrying *varada, triśūla, vajraghaṇṭā* and *kartarī.*

34. Four-armed goddess seated in *lalitāsana* on a horse carrying *varada,* sword, *triśūla* and *abhaya.*

35. Four-armed goddess seated in *lalitāsana* on a lotus flower carrying *varada,* lotus flower, book and *abhaya.* Inscribed Bhavānī.

36. Four-armed goddess seated in *lalitāsana* on a lotus flower carrying *varada, triśūla,* sword and *abhaya.*

37. Four-armed goddess seated in *lalitāsana* on a lotus flower carrying arrow, *vajra, chakra* and bow. Inscribed Bhavānī.

38. Four-armed goddess seated in *lalitāsana* on a lotus flower carrying *varada*, rosary, *śakti* and *abhaya*. Inscribed Bhavānī.

39. Four-armed goddess seated in *lalitāsana* on a bull. She plays on *vīṇa* with the principal pair of hands and carries *ḍamaru* and *triśūla* in the other pair.

Eastern face

40. Four-armed Kaumārī (not labelled) seated in *lalitāsana* on lotus carrying cock, peacock feathers, *tridaṇḍī* and *abhaya*.

41. Four-armed goddess seated in *lalitāsana* on Garuḍa carrying *varada, chakra, śaṅkha* and *abhaya*. Inscribed Bhavānī.

42. Four-armed goddess seated in *lalitāsana* on an elephant carrying *varada, vajra*, goad and *abhaya*.

43. Four-armed goddess seated in *lalitāsana* on a bull carrying *varada*, skull-cup, *khaṭvāṅga* and *abhaya*.

44. Four-armed goddess seated in *lalitāsana* on a lotus flower carrying skull-cup, rosary, human head and *śakti*. She is called Bhavānī. The inscription calls the *śakti* as *triśūla*.

45. Four-armed goddess seated in *lalitāsana* on a lotus flower carrying an indistinct object which may be a small skin, rosary, human head and *kartarī*.

46. Four-armed goddess seated in *lalitāsana* on a stag carrying *varada, gadā, pāśa* and *abhaya*.

47. Four-armed goddess seated on a lotus flower carrying *kartarī*, sword, *khaṭvāṅga* and human head.

48. Four-armed goddess seated in *padmāsana* on an elephant. She plays on *vīṇā* with the main pair of hands and carries *vajra* and goad in the other pair.

Middle row

North face

49. Five-headed and fourteen-armed god standing in *ālīḍhāsana* with the right foot on Garuḍa and left on a lotus flower. He carries in the first pair of hands *chakra* and *śaṅkha* and in the second pair lotus flower and *gadā*. The corpse of a warrior is suspended on his right knee, while another warrior carrying sword and shield and standing in front of his left foot is trying to fight the god. The remaining right hands of the god carry rosary, jewel, *vajra*, arrow and sword. The remaining left hands carry shield, bow, *vajra-ghaṇṭā*, book and *abhaya*. The inscription calls the victims as *Madhu* and *Kaiṭabha*. Inscribed as Chaturbhuja.

50. Five-headed and sixteen-armed goddess standing in *ālīḍhāsana* with her right foot on the lion mount and left foot on lotus. She carries *pāśa*, with which the neck of the demon has been tied and his tuft in the main pair of hands. The demon is depicted in human form as a mailed warrior carrying sword and shield. The second pair carries axe and skull-cup. The remaining right hands carry *gadā, vajra*, arrow, *śaṅkha, triśūla* and sword, while the remaining left hands carry shield, *chakra*, peacock feathers, bow, *vajra* (?) and bell. Three pairs of flags flank the central heads and the three tiers. She wears jewelled diadem on all the heads, torques, armour on her shoulders and chest, pearl garland, *muṇḍa-mālā*, armlets,

bangles, bell-anklets and lower garment fastened by belt with the latticed apron in front. Inscribed Bhavānī.

51. Five-headed and sixteen-armed goddess standing in *ālīḍhāsana* with her right foot on the lion mount and left foot on a lotus. The main pair of hands carries sword and tuft of the demon. The second pair carries peacock feathers and *ghaṇṭā*. The remaining right hands carry *triśūla, chakra,* arrow, goad, *vajra* and hammer. The remaining left hands carry mirror, *mushṭi,* lotus flower, bow, *pāśa* and *khaṭvāṅga.*

52. Five-headed and sixteen-armed goddess standing in *ālīḍhāsana* with her feet resting on the lion-mount and lotus and fighting a mailed demon. The first pair of hands carries *gadā* and staff. The second pair carries *vajra* and *ghaṇṭā*. The remaining right hands carry peacock feathers, arrow, *chakra, śaṅkha,* sword and spear. The remaining left hands carry a crescentic shield, a circular shield, *pāśa*, goad, bow and axe as well as the tuft of the demon.

53. Five-headed and sixteen-armed goddess standing in *ālīḍhāsana* with her feet resting on the lion-mount and lotus and fighting a mailed demon. The first pair of hands carries *chakra* and lotus flower. The second pair carries hammer *(musala)* and *pāśa*. The remaining right hands carry arrow, goad, chisel (?), *vajra* and *śakti*. The left hands carry the tuft of the demon, shield, lotus flower or *śakti,* mirror, *tarjanī* and bow.

North face

54. Five-headed and sixteen-armed goddess standing in *ālīḍhāsana* with her feet resting on the lion-mount and lotus and fighting a mailed demon. In the main pair of hands the goddess holds the *śakti* with which she gores the demon. The next pair carries *kartarī* and skull-cup. The remaining right hands carry *khaṭvāṅga*, goad, arrow, *śaṅkha, triśūla* and sword. The remaining left hands carry shield, lotus flower, peacock feathers, bow, *pāśa* and *kalaśa.*

55. Five-headed and sixteen-armed goddess standing in *ālīḍhāsana* with her right foot resting on the lion-mount and fighting a mailed demon. With the left foot the goddess tramples upon the chest of the demon whose head has been severed. With the main pair of hands she draws arrow *(śara-kshepa)* and bow. The next pair holds the right hand upright in the *daṇḍa* pose and carries skull-cup in the left hand. The remaining right hands carry goad, *gadā, vajra, śaṅkha, triśūla* and sword. The remaining left hands carry shield, jewel, peacock feathers, *ghaṇṭā, kalaśa, pāśa* and bow.

56. Five-headed and sixteen-armed goddess standing in *ālīḍhāsana* with her feet resting on the lion and lotus and fighting a mailed demon. The main pair of hands carries the axe and *śaṅkha*. The second pair carries small spear-like weapon and skull-cup. The remaining right hands carry arrow, goad, *vajra,* small *triśūla*, sword and *śaṅkha*. The remaining left hands carry *śakti,* shield, *chakra, ghaṇṭā, pāśa* and bow.

57. Five-headed and sixteen-armed goddess standing in *ālīḍhāsana* with her feet resting on the lion and lotus and fighting a mailed demon. The head of the demon has been struck off. The main pair of hands carries *gadā* and *musala*. The next pair carries peacock feathers and axe. The remaining right hands carry *vajra,* arrow, *chakra*, *śaṅkha*, small spear and

sword. The remaining left hands carry circular shield, a crescentic shield, goad, *pāśa*, bow and bell.

58. Five-headed and sixteen-armed goddess standing in *ālīḍhāsana* with her feet resting on the lion and lotus and fighting a mailed demon. With the main right hand she strikes a spear which pierces the demon's chest and has cut his arm into two pieces. In the main left hand she carries *pāśa*. The next pair of hands carries axe and *śaṅkha*. The remaining right hands carry goad, *vajra*, arrow, *śaṅkha, triśūla* and sword. The remaining left hands carry shield, *chakra*, peacock feathers, bow, bell and skull-cup.

59. Five-headed and sixteen-armed goddess standing in *ālīḍhāsana* with her feet resting on the lion and lotus and fighting a mailed demon. The right hand of the demon has been struck off. The main pair of hands carries the peacock feathers and tuft of the demon. The next pair carries *chakra* and *pāśa*. The remaining right hands carry goad, *vajra*, spear, hammer, arrow and sword. The remaining left hands carry shield, bow, mirror, *tarjanī*, bell and umbrella-shaped *dhvaja*.

60. Five-headed and sixteen-armed goddess standing in *ālīḍhāsana* with her feet resting on the lion and lotus and fighting a mailed demon. The head of the demon has been struck off and is not to be seen. The main pair of hands of the goddess carries the spear which pierces the chest of the demon, while the main left hand holds the *śaṅkha* as well as the right hand of the demon. The next pair of hands carries the axe and skull-cup. The remaining right hands carry goad, *vajra*, arrow, *śaṅkha*, *triśūla*, and sword. The remaining left hands carry shield, *chakra*, peacock feathers, bow, bell and *pāśa*.

61. This is the main image which is larger than others and represents five-headed and eighteen-armed *Chaṇḍī* standing in *ālīḍhāsana* with her feet resting on the lion and lotus. With the first pair of hands she holds the bowl and *vindu-mudrā*. With the next pair of hands she holds the tail-ends of the two snakes which have tightly gripped the waists of the two aides of the demon standing in *ālīḍhāsana* at the two ends. The third pair of hands carries *ḍamaru* and *khaṭvāṅga* The remaining right hands carry *triśūla* with which the demon has been gored, *varada*, goad, *vajra*, arrow and sword. The remaining left hands carry shield, bow, bell, *pāśa, abhaya* and the tuft of the demon. In the upper field she is flanked by Sūrya riding a chariot of seven horses complete with Aruṇa, Ushā and Pratyūshā. On the corresponding left we have Chandra riding a chariot of seven geese.

62. Five-headed and sixteen-armed goddess standing in *ālīḍhāsana* with her feet resting on the lion and lotus and fighting a mailed demon. The main pair of hands carries goad and *pāśa* as well as the tuft of the demon. The next pair carries axe and skull-cup. The remaining right hands carry *gadā*, *vajra*, arrow, *śaṅkha*, *triśūla* and sword. The remaining left hands carry shield, *chakra*, *śakti*, bow, bell and *kalaśa*.

63. Five-headed and sixteen-armed goddess standing in *ālīḍhāsana* with her feet resting on the lion and lotus and fighting a mailed demon. The main pair of hands carries *triśūla* which pierces the buttocks of the demon and the skull-cup. The next pair carries *śaṅkha* and peacock feathers. The remaining right hands carry goad, arrow, serpent, small spear and sword. The remaining left hands carry shield, *triśūla*, *chakra*, *kalaśa* and *pāśa*.

64. Five-headed and sixteen-armed goddess standing in *ālīḍhāsana* with her feet resting on the lion and lotus and fighting a mailed demon. The main pair of hands carries spear which pierces the right arm of the demon and *tarjanī*. The next pair carrier goad and *dhvaja*. The remaining right hands carry *chakra, vajra,* arrow, peacock feathers, hammer and sword. The remaining left hands carry shield, *nara-muṇḍa* (only the hair is shown), mirror, bow, bell and *pāśa*.

65. Five-headed and sixteen-armed goddess standing in *ālīḍhāsana* with her feet resting on the lion and lotus and fighting a mailed demon. The main pair of hands carries *triśūla* which pierces the face of the demon and *chakra*. The next pair carries axe and *śakti* resembling peacock feathers, which end in a blade pointing downwards. The remaining right hands carry arrow, *vajra, śaṅkha,* small spear, goad and sword. The remaining left hands carry shield, *pāśa,* skull-cup, *kalaśa,* bell and tuft of the demon.

66. Five-headed and sixteen-armed goddess standing in *ālīḍhāsana* with her feet resting on the lion and lotus and fighting a mailed demon. The main pair of hands carries a long *musala* with which the demon has been struck at the shoulders and the tuft of the demon. The next pair carries goad and *pāśa*. The remaining right hands carry *gadā, vajra,* arrow, hammer, peacock feathers and sword. The remaining left hands carry *nara-muṇḍa,* lotus flower, mirror, umbrella-shaped *dhvaja,* bell and *tarjanī*. (The umbrella has been actually called *dhvaja* in the inscription).

67. Five-headed and sixteen-armed goddess standing in *ālīḍhāsana* with her feet resting on the lion and lotus and fighting a mailed demon. The main pair of hands carries peacock feathers and the tuft of the demon. The next pair carries arrow and bow. The remaining right hands carry *chakra,* small spear, goad, *vajra,* hammer and sword. The remaining left hands carry shield, mirror, bell, *pāśa, tarjanī* and flag.

68. Five-headed and sixteen-armed goddess standing in *ālīḍhāsana* with her feet resting on the lion and lotus and fighting a mailed demon. The main pair of hands carries sword and shield. The next pair carries a *gadā* in each hand. The remaining right hands carry *vajra, śakti, chakra,* arrow, *śaṅkha* and spear. The remaining left hands carry shield, *pāśa,* bow, goad, axe and bell.

69. Five-headed and sixteen-armed goddess standing in *ālīḍhāsana* with her feet resting on the lion and lotus and fighting a mailed demon. The main pair of hands carries peacock feathers and the tuft of the demon. The next pair carries *chakra* and *pāśa*. The remaining right hands carry arrow, goad, hammer, *triśūla*, spear, *śūla* and sword. The remaining left hands carry shield, mirror, bell, *tarjanī, pāśa* or *dhvaja* and bow.

70. Five-headed and sixteen-armed goddess standing in *ālīḍhāsana* with her feet resting on the lion and lotus and fighting a mailed demon. The main pair of hands carries spears which pierces the chest of the demon and a rectangular shield. The next pair carries peacock feathers and axe. The remaining right hands carry *gadā, vajra,* arrow, *chakra, śaṅkha* and sword. The remaining left hands carry shield, goad, *pāśa,* bow, bell and staff.

71. Five-headed and sixteen-armed Chamuṇḍā standing in *ālīḍhāsana* with her feet resting on the lion and lotus. Her main pair of hands carries tufts of the severed heads of two mailed demons, one on either side of her. The next pair carries *chakra* and *pāśa*. The

remaining right hands carry peacock feathers, small spear or *śūla*, arrow, goad, *vajra* and sword. The remaining left hands carry shield, bell, flag, bow, mirror and *tarjanī*.

72. Five-headed and sixteen-armed goddess standing in *ālīḍhāsana* with her feet resting on the lion and lotus and fighting a mailed demon. The main pair of hands carries *chakra* and the head of the demon which has been cut off. The next pair carries *vajra* and *ghaṇṭā*. The remaining right hands carry small spear, indistinct, goad, arrow, *śaṅkha* and sword. The remaining left hands carry shield, peacock feathers, serpent, *pāśa*, *kalaśa* and skull-cup.

73. Five-headed and sixteen-armed goddess standing in *ālīḍhāsana* with her feet resting on the lion and lotus and fighting a mailed demon. The main pair of hands carries the bowl and *vindu-mudrā*. The next pair carries *chakra* and *gadā*. This is the only case where the buffalo is also shown with the mailed demon in human form issuing from his decapitated head. The lowest right hand carries *triśūla* which pierces the chest of the demon and the lowest left carries the tail of the buffalo as well as the tuft of the demon. The remaining right hands carry *ḍamaru*, *varada*, goad, *vajra*, crescent-headed arrow and sword. The remaining left hands carry shield, bow, bell, *pāśa*, *abhaya*, *khaṭvāṅga* and *tarjanī*.

Western face

Bottom row

74. Four-armed Hanumān standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on a pair of lotuses. The main pair of hands holds the bowl and *varada-mudrā*. The next pair carries *ḍamaru* and *triśūla*.

75. Eight-armed god with terrific face and raised curls standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on the lion-mount. His two-armed Śakti stands in *tribhaṅga* carrying *āliṅgana* and *abhaya*. The god wears *patra-kuṇḍalas*, torque, *sarpopavīta*, wristlets and anklets of snakes, *muṇḍa-mālā* and lower garment. The god stands on lion while his Śakti stands on peacock. The right hands carry *kartarī*, *ḍamaru*, *triśūla* and sword. The left hands carry shield, *ghaṇṭā*, *khaṭvāṅga* and *āliṅgana*.

76. Eight-armed god with terrific face and raised curls standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on human and bull mounts. The right hands carry serpent(?), *pāśa*, *ḍamaru* and *triśūla*. The left hands carry *tarjanī*(?) *khaṭvāṅga*, rosary and *gadā*.

77. Eight-armed god with terrific face and raised curls standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on boar and peacock mounts. The Śakti dances in *ardhaprayankāsana* with her left feet on peacock. The right hands carry *varada*, rosary, *śakti*? and *vajra*. The left hands carry goad, *triśūla*, serpent and *śakti* resembling peacock feathers.

78. Eight-armed god with terrific face and raised curls standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on a pair of Garuda figures as mounts. The god carries dumb-bell-shaped *śakti*, *vajra*, *śaṅkha* and peacock feathers in right hands and goad, book, bell and vase-cum-*āliṅgana* in the left hands.

79. Eight-armed god with terrific face and raised curls standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on the serpent and bull mounts. The Śakti is boar-headed dancing in *ardhaparyaṅkāsana*. Even the *śakti* wears *muṇḍa-mālā*. The god carries skull-cup, lotus, rosary and sword in the right hands; and shield, double *vajra*, *chakra* and *āliṅgana* in the left hands.

80. Eight-armed god with terrific face and raised curls standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on the horse and elephant mounts. The god carries *varada,* lotus flower, *pāśa* and sword in the right hands; and shield, *ḍamaru,* serpent and book in the left hands.

81. Eight-armed god with terrific face and raised curls standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on the bull and human mounts. His Śakti is Chāmuṇḍā dancing in *ardhaparyaṅkāsana.* Both of them wear *muṇḍa-mālā.* The god carries small spear, *pāśa,* rosary and sword in the right hands; and *khaṭvāṅga, triśūla,* serpent and Śakti resembling peacock feathers-cum-*āliṅgana* in the left hands. He embraces his Śakti with the lowest left hand.

82. Eight-armed god with terrific face and raised curls standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on human and lion mounts. The god carries skull-cup, *kartarī, ḍamaru* and sword in the right hands and shield, *khaṭvāṅga, nara-muṇḍa* and *abhaya*-cum-*āliṅgana* in the left hands.

83. Four-armed Hanumān standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on a pair of lotuses. The main pair of hands holds the bowl and *vindu-mudrā.* The next pair carries *ḍamaru* and *triśūla.*

84. Five-headed and ten-armed Gaṇeśa standing in *ālīḍhāsana* with the right foot resting on lion and the left on a lotus flower. The main right hand carries tusk *(ekarada).* The remaining right hands carry *nara-muṇḍa,* hammer, *viśva-vajra, abhaya* and bowl of sweets, the last hand embracing the Śakti. The Śakti carries in both her hands a bowl of sweets which the god is taking. She is standing in *tribhaṅga* on a lotus.

85. Eight-armed god standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on a pair of lotuses. The Śakti also stands in *tribhaṅga* on lotus. The god is not shown in a terrific form and wears long garland. The right hands carry *varada,* rosary, crescent-headed arrow and spear. The left hands carry *khaṭvāṅga,* bow, *bījapūraka* and *abhaya.* The god wears *jaṭāmukuṭa* adorned with crescent and jewelled diadem, *sarpa-kuṇḍalas, sarpopavīta* and anklets and wristlets of snakes and torque. He is three-eyed.

86. Eight-armed god standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on a pair of lotuses. His Śakti also stands in *tribhaṅga* on a lotus. The god is not shown in a terrific form and wears long garland. The right hands carry *varada,* rosary, arrow and *śakti.* The left hands carry *khaṭvāṅga,* bow, fruit and *abhaya.* The god wears *jaṭāmukuṭa* adorned with crescent and jewelled diadem, *sarpa-kuṇḍalas, sarpopavīta* and anklets and wristlets of snakes and torque. He is three-eyed.

87. Eight-armed god standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on a pair of lotuses. The Śakti also stands in *tribhaṅga* on a lotus. The god is not shown in a terrific form and wears long garland. The god carries *varada,* spear, arrow and rosary in right hands and fruit, bow, *khaṭvāṅga* and *abhaya* in left hands. His head is slightly inclined towards his Śakti. The god wears *jaṭāmukuṭa* adorned by crescent and jewelled diadem, *sarpa-kuṇḍalas, sarpopavīta* and anklets and wristlets of snakes and torque. He is three-eyed.

88. Eight-armed god standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on a pair of lotuses. His Śakti also stands in *tribhaṅga* on lotus. The god is not shown in a terrific form and wears long garland. The right hands carry *varada,* spear, rosary and arrow. The left hands carry bow, fruit, *gadā* and *abhaya.*

89. Eight-armed god standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on a pair of lotuses. His Śakti also stands in *tribhaṅga* on a lotus. The god is not shown in a terrific form and wears long garland. The right hands carry *varada,* rosary, crescent-headed arrow and sword. The left hands carry

long bow, curved staff, fruit and *abhaya*. Figures 88 to 90 wear a bicornate type of *jaṭābhāra* over the headdress.

90. Five-headed and ten-armed god standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on the bull and lion-mounts. His Sakti stands on lion. The right hands carry *abhaya, ḍamaru, vajra,* sword and *triśūla*. The left hands carry serpent, *pāśa,* bell, *kartarī* and goad-cum-*ālingaṅa*. The god wears *muṇḍa-mālā* but the Śakti wears garland.

91. This is the main god of the row. His main right hand is held in *abhaya*. The remaining right hands carry *ḍamaru, khaṭvāṅga,* sword and *triśūla*. The left hands carry serpent, *pāśa, ghaṇṭā,* fire and goad, the lowest hand being held in *āliṅgana*. This is a form of Śiva.

92-96. God standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on a pair of lotuses. Each is eight-armed and benevolent. All are alike.

97. Six-headed and twelve-armed Kumāra standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on the peacock and lotus. His Śakti also stands on a lotus. The right hands carry *gadā, varada,* rosary, arrow, small spear and sword. The left hands carry shield, cock, bow, rosary or serpent, *abhaya* and *pāśa*-cum-*āliṅgana*. All the heads wear jewelled diadem. The god also wears *ratna*-torque, *hāra, ratnopavīta,* armlets, wristlets, *pādāṅgadas,* bell-anklets, long *mālā* and lower garment. The Śakti also wears long garland.

98. Three-headed and eight-armed Brahmā standing on the *haṁsa* and lotus. His Śakti also stands on lotus. The principal head is bearded representing definitely Brahmā. The god carries *varada,* bowl, book and rosary in the right hands while the left hands carry *tridaṇḍī, kamaṇḍalu, tripatākā* and *abhaya*.

99. Eight-armed god standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on the elephant and lotus. His Śakti stands on a lotus. He is Indra wearing a very finely-carved *kirīṭa-mukuta*. The right hands carry *varada,* bowl, *vajra,* and *chakra*. The left hands carry *triśūla,* jewel, *tripatākā* and *abhaya*.

100. Eight-armed god standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on the stag and lotus. The Śakti also stands on lotus. The right hands carry *varada,* bowl, *sruk* and peacock feathers. The left hands carry spear, *kamaṇḍalu, tripatākā* and *abhaya*.

Eastern face

101. Eight-armed god standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on the bull and lotus. The right hands carry *varada,* bowl, *gadā*(?) and sword; the left hands carry *śaṅkha,* lotus, *tripatākā* and *abhaya*.

102. Eight-armed god standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on a human mount and lotus. He has a terrific face showing third eye and wears *muṇḍa-mālā*. The right hands carry *varada,* bowl, *nara-muṇḍa* and sword. The left hands carry shield, bowl, *tripatākā* and *abhaya*. The Śakti stands as usual and wears garland.

103. Eight-armed Varuṇa standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on the crocodile and lotus under a canopy of serpent hoods. He carries in his right hands *varada,* bowl, *śaṅkha* and goad and in the left hands *pāśa,* serpent, *vindu-mudrā* and *abhaya*. His Śakti also stands under a canopy of serpent hoods.

104. Eight-armed god standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on a bull and lotus. The right hands carry *varada,* skull-cup, *gadā* and umbrella. The left hands carry flag, *chakra, vindu-mudrā* and *abhaya*.

105. Eight-armed god standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on a horse and lotus. The right hands carry *varada,* skull-cup, fruit and *gadā.* The left hands carry *triśūla,* mongoose vomitting jewels, *vindu-mudrā and abhaya.* He might represent Kubera.

106. Eight-armed god standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on the bull and lotus. The right hands carry *varada,* skull-cup, rosary and *ḍamaru.* The left hands carry *triśūla, kamaṇḍalu, vindu-mudrā* and *abhaya.* He is Śiva and wears *jaṭābhāra, muṇḍa-mālā,* etc.

107. Eight-armed god standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on the Garuḍa and lotus. He carries *varada,* skull-cup, lotus flower and *chakra* in the right hands. The left hands carry *gadā, śaṅkha, vindu-mudrā* and *abhaya.* He may represent Vishṇu.

BRAHMANICAL TĀNTRIC IMAGES IN MAHADEVA TEMPLE, RANI POKHARI

The main shrine enshrines a Śiva-*liṅga,* but in the principal hind niche is kept an image of the consort of Hari-Śaṅkara.

The goddess Hari-Śaṅkarī is six-headed and twelve-armed standing in *ālīḍhāsana* with the right foot resting on Garuḍa shown with folded hands and the left one on couchant Nandī. The right hands pertaining to the Vishṇu aspect carry *varada, vajra-ghaṇṭā, padma, gadā, śaṅkha* and *chakra,* while the left hands pertaining to the Śiva aspect carry *triśūla, utpala, khaṭvāṅga,* human head, *ḍamaru* and *abhaya.* Each head wears a three-peaked diadem and shows the third eye. She also wears *patra-kuṇḍalas,* torque, *sarpa-hāra, muṇḍa-mālā,* armlets, bangles, *pādāṅgadas* and bell-anklets, and is draped in lower garment fastened by a jewelled belt with a latticed apron. The stone image is datable to *circa* seventeenth century.

Inside the sanctum are also placed some other stone images.

One of them represents four-armed Sūrya seated with his Śakti on a chariot of seven horses with his usual associates viz. Ushā, Pratyūshā and Aruṇa. His main pair of hands carries lotus flowers, while of the other pair the right one is held in *abhaya* and the left one in *āliṅgana.* His Śakti, seated in *lalitāsana* on the left lap of her Lord is probably four-armed. Her principal pair of hands is held in *añjali,* the remaining hands carrying probably lotus flower are broken off. Sūrya is seated in *padmāsana.* The image is datable to about the seventeenth century.

There is a stone image of five-headed and ten-armed Gaṇeśa seated with his Śakti. He is represented seated on Nandī. His right hands carry bowl of sweets, *chakra, mudgara* (hammer), *triśūla* and goad, while his left hands carry *pāśa,* tusk, bowl of sweets, axe, and *āliṅgana.* His Śakti, seated in *lalitāsana,* is four-armed. Her main pair of hands is held in *añjali* and of the other pair, the right one is held in *āliṅgana* and the left one in *abhaya.* This is a late and crude image, not earlier than the seventeenth century.

There are also about a dozen terracotta figures representing Bhū-varāha, Vishṇu, Narasiṁha, a three-headed Nāgī, Garuḍa and two figures of Chandra seated on crocodile. There is also a stone image of four-armed Vishṇu seated in *padmāsana* on Garuḍa carrying lotus, *chakra, gadā* and *śaṅkha.*

In the four corners of this shrine are four subsidiary shrines each fitted with a terracotta doorway. Each represents a *siṁhadvāra* flanked by two projecting *vyālas* and crowned by a *kīrttimukha*. Above the pilasters the arch takes the form of *makara-toraṇa*.

The north-east corner shrine shows an image of four-armed Bhairava standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on a serpent with his Śakti who also stands on the same serpent and is two-armed carrying *varada* and *abhaya*. The god has a terrific three-eyed face with raised curls, bulging eyes, knit eye-brows and moustaches and wears *kuṇḍalas*, armlets, wristlets, *hāra* and anklets of snakes, *muṇḍa-mālā* and a lower garment with central tassel. His right hands carry *varada* and *triśūla*, while the upper left hand carries *vajra-ghaṇṭā* and the lower left hand held in *āliṅgana* rests on the waist of his Śakti and carries a blue lotus. The figure dates from *circa* seventeenth century.

The north-west corner shrine shows three-headed and six-armed goddess standing in *ālīḍhāsana* on a human corpse, flanked by a vulture on each side. She carries *kartarī, triśūla,* sword, shield, mirror and skull-cup and wears *muṇḍa-mālā* and a lower garment with the usual latticed apron. The image dates from about the seventeenth century.

The south-east corner shrine shows an image of eighteen-armed Naṭarāja dancing in *ardhaparyaṅkāsana* with his left foot resting on a skull-cup. His principal pair of hands carries the bowl and the *vindu-mudrā*. The second pair carries *vajra* and *vajra-ghaṇṭā*. The remaining right hands carry *ḍamaru, varada,* lotus flower, *gadā, mudgara* (hammer), *triśūla* and sword. The remaining left hands carry shield, goad, *pāśa, śaṅkha,* blue lotus, serpent and *khaṭvāṅga*. Curiously enough, his *kirīṭa-mukuṭa* is flanked by flags which are usually associated with goddesses. He also wears *patra-kuṇḍalas,* torque, pearl necklace, *muṇḍa-mālā,* armlets, wristlets, bell anklets and a lower garment with a latticed apron. The third eye is represented on the forehead. This figure is datable to *circa* seventeenth century.

The south-west corner shrine is dedicated to ten-headed, ten-armed and ten-legged goddess standing in *ālīḍhāsana*. Her main pair of hands carries *śaṅkha* and a human head. The remaining right hands carry *triśūla, gadā,* arrow and sword. The remaining left hands carry shield, bow, *pāśa* and *triśūla*-cum-*paraśu*. The goddess has raised curls with third eye in each face and wears *kuṇḍalas,* torque, *hāra,* armlets and wristlets of snakes. She also wears *muṇḍa-mālā* and a lower garment with a latticed apron. The figure is datable to about the seventeenth century.

BUDDHIST IMAGES

YAKSHA—BODHISATTVA

The earliest image hitherto found in Nepal is the sandstone torso of a *Yaksha*—Bodhisattva[1] which has only recently been brought to notice. Although the head, hands (except for some fingers of the left hand) and feet of the figure are missing, its stylistic affinity with the figures of early Indian *Yaksha* and Mathura Bodhisattvas leaves no doubt that it belongs to the same genre. The sculpture is fully carved in the round, though it is more sensitively modelled in the front than at the back. It stands in *samabhaṅga* and shows a sturdy build with broad shoulders, heaving chest, strong thighs and not too flabby a belly. It dons an *ekāṁsika uttarīya* on the left shoulder, the gathered folds of the *uttarīya* being held in the clenched left hand of which only the thumb and traces of some fingers have survived. The stance of the figure and the treatment of the *uttarīya* and its folds, partly held in the left fist kept akimbo, are identical with the early Buddha—Bodhisattva images of the Mathura School. The rendering of the lower garment, however, differs from the said Mathura type in details and is shown as almost diaphanous, though the double-wound waist-band is again akin to the Bodhisattva figure from Maholi (Mathura). The modelling of the back is sketchy and follows the earlier tradition of the *Yaksha* figures. In fact the peculiar rendering of the buttocks, and the treatment of the *kachchha* of the *dhotī* and the looped and tasellated ends of the *kaṇṭha-hāra* at the back are strongly reminiscent of the statue of Maṇibhadra *Yaksha* from Pawaya.[2]

Since our figure wears a *kantha-hāra* and a *sakachchha dhotī*, it is more likely to represent a *Yaksha* than a Buddha—Bodhisattva. But as already indicated, it imbibes certain stylistic mannerisms of the early Bodhisattva type of Mathura and in some respects improves thereon by making the upper part of the body less stocky and more proportionate and by delineating the lower garment as practically diaphanous. Besides being the earliest known sculpture from Nepal, this figure is thus remarkable for providing a link between the early *Yaksha* and Bodhisattva types and is assignable to *circa* first century AD.

BUDDHA FIGURES

The earliest Buddha images hitherto found in the Kathmandu Valley are the standing figures of Buddha from Chabel and Bangemura, which are both parts of the city of Kathmandu. While the former is made of greyish stone and has both hands mutilated and the *prabhāvalī* missing, the latter is made of dark grey limestone and is excellently

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[1] *Ancient Nepal*, No. 4, pp. 37-39, pl. V

[2] *Saga of Indian Sculpture* (Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan, Bombay 1957), pl. 4 (b)

preserved with its oval *prabhāvalī* and two flanking figures of seated devotees with hands in *añjalimudrā*. Both are sculpted in the fifth century Gupta style of India and are heavily influenced by the Sarnath school in respect of the sensitive modelling, the posture of standing with the weight of the body borne on the right leg and the left leg slightly advanced and the diaphanous treatment of the drapery revealing the anatomy, particularly the two knee-joints, the bulging shoulder and the chest and the line of depression at the waist. The Bangamura figure which is well-preserved, shows the right hand of Buddha stretched in *varada* and the left hand half-stretched holding the gathered ends of the *saṅghāṭī*. A comparison of the two figures shows that the hands of the Chabel Buddha, in spite of their poor preservation, were held identically. The Chabel figure shows a more sensitive modelling and greater affinity with the Sarnath type, and is closely comparable with the standing Buddha figure from Sarnath Museum (DGA NEG. NO. 189/63). The Bangamura Buddha, however, shows a distinctive oval *prabhāvalī*, decorated with a design of minute triangular petals fringed by beads at the edges and is notable also for introducing the kneeling devotees at the flanks. This figure also shows a pair of holes on each side of the head similar to those found on the Tilaganga image of Vishṇu Vikrānta dated in year 389 (AD 467) of king Mānadeva.

A poorly preserved and defaced standing Buddha image found from the ruins of a Buddhist Vihāra near Budha Nilakantha appears to be of the same style and date as the two figures discussed above.

The only early inscribed Buddha image is a limestone relief from Chapatol, Patan, showing the Buddha seated (probably in *bhūsparśa-mudrā*), flanked on each side by a Bodhisattva carrying *chāmara* and *padma* and wearing unusually tall *kirīṭa-mukuṭa*. Artistically the relief is not of much significance, but the inscription, assignable to the late sixth century AD is historically important for its reference to a *gandha-kuṭī* (Buddhist shrine) and a *bhikshuṇī-saṅgha*.

In the next stage the Buddha figures stand in graceful *ābhaṅga* with their right hand stretched in the *varada-mudrā* and the left hand raised shoulder high, holding the gathered ends of the *saṅghāṭī*. To circa seventh century are assignable two such standing Buddha images carved in two out of the four niches of the *sarvatobhadra* (prismatic) *chaitya* at Dhvaka Baha, Kathmandu, one showing Mathura type of drapery and the other the wet drapery of Sarnath, but both revealing the *kaṭisūtra* with its knot and the looped scarf-ends. A cognate limestone figure of standing Buddha is known from a private collection at Law Form, Ramshah Path, Kathmandu, which is closer to Sarnath than any other sculpture from Nepal not only in respect of the treatment of drapery but also of refined modelling and delineation of facial features and meditative expression. The Dhvaka Baha figures, on the other hand, have a Nepalese physiognomical set and lack the luminous quality of the Ramshah Path Buddha. (It may be mentioned here that the figures in the remaining two niches of the Dhvaka Baha *chaitya* represent Vajrapāṇi and Padmapāṇi, while the four smaller niches on the *medhi* of its crowning *stūpa* show identical Buddha figures seated in *dhyānāsana*, representing the beginning of the concept of the five Dhyānī-Buddhas.)

Another *sarvatobhadra* image kept in the *hiti* at Nag Bahal, Patan, shows standing

figures of Padmapāṇi, Maitreya, Vajrapāṇi and Buddha, the last being a replica of the Dhvaka Baha Buddha donning the Sarnath drapery. That these figures are at least half a century later than those of Dhvaka Baha is indicated by their developed modelling and iconographical features and the fact that all of them have flame-fringed oval nimbus and *prabhāvalī*. A loose Buddha figure of black limestone in the Nag Bahi shrine nearby also pertains to a comparable date and style with its body type and drapery derived from Sarnath and its largish ovoid head from Mathura.

There is a battered and defaced *sarvatobhadra* stele in a dried-up *hiti* at Kasai Tol, Patan, which is practically a replica of the Nag Bahal stele discussed above. The conventionalised treatment of figures including that of the Buddha and the presence of bead-and-flame borders for both the nimbus and the *prabhāvalī* would indicate a ninth century date for it.

There is a prismatic late Lichchhavi *chaitya* in the The Bahil at Thamel, carved with standing figures of the Buddha wearing Mathura type of drapery on all the four sides of its lower portion. Two of them hold the right hand in the *varada* and the remaining two hold the same hand in the *abhaya* pose. But no two figures are alike and a variety is introduced by the divergent way in which the gathered ends of the *saṅghāṭi* are held in the left hand, which is either raised shoulder-high or stretched down in the *daṇḍa-hasta*. The drapery at the neck is, however, oddly depicted in all the figures which are stylistically assignable to the ninth century AD.

The next stage in the evolution of the Buddha image is marked by the 11 high standing Buddha from Swayambhūnātha which follows the iconographical type of the Buddha figure on the Nag Bahal stele derived from the Sarnath model, but its facial features and modelling as also its developed flame-fringed oval nimbus and *prabhāvalī* approximate the style of the early Pāla Buddha figures of eastern India. The Buddha image lying half-buried on the Aryaghat resembles the Svyambhūnātha image with this difference that its head is large and ovoid. These two Buddha figures are stylistically attributable to circa AD 900.

The Pāla style of seated as well as standing Buddha figures representing the Master in the *varada*, *abhaya*, *vyākhyāna* and *bhūmisparśa-mudrās* and wearing the Sarnath type of wet drapery became stereotyped in Nepal and continued to be made here in limited quantity till *circa* seventeenth century. These are found in or around the Buddhist *chaityas* and *vihāras* and a fair number of them may be seen at such Buddhist establishments as the Svayambhūnātha and the Mahabodhi Temple at Patan.

It is indeed easy to recognize the Buddha figures when they are represented as standing, but it is difficult to distinguish seated Buddha images from those of the Dhāyni-Buddhas which are indeed more popular in Nepal.

Sculptural representations of the life-scenes of the Buddha are relatively fewer in Nepal. Two sculptures of *circa* ninth century representing life-scenes, however, are remarkable for their elegant modelling and narrative vivacity. One of them from Yangal hiti, Kathmandu, now in the National Museum, Kathmandu, is a fragment of the scene of Māra's temptation, showing two charming daughters of Māra standing in seductive poses and trying to tempt the Master (portion broken off), with Māra's host comprising

ferocious goblins, demons and *yakshas* including a skeletal figure resembling Chāmuṇḍā, a buffalo-headed demon and Gaṇeśa wielding axe, gesticulating and launching assaults on the Buddha. The other from Deo-Patan, now in the National Museum, Kathmandu represents the scene of Nativity and shows Māyādevī standing in a graceful *tribhaṅga* holding a branch of the tree which has bent down and quickened to her touch, with the infant Buddha standing on a lotus against an oval *prabhāvalī*, represented on her right flank. The newly born Buddha is being bathed by a pair of flying celestial devotees with water mixed with lotus blossoms from upturned vases. While the first sculpture is reminiscent of the same scene depicted in Cave 26 at Ajanta and is suggestive of contacts with the art of Deccan, the other, with its supple modelling and mellifluous contours is inspired by the classical art traditions of Mathura and Magadha. Some representations are known also of the descent of the Buddha from the Trayastriṁśa heaven, flanked by Brahmā and Indra, the latter holding umbrella over the Master's head. These also date from the later Lichchhavi times.

DHYĀNĪ-BUDDHAS

The Dhyāni-Buddhas are invariably represented dressed like the Buddha and seated in *padmāsana* or *vajraparyāṅkāsana* on a lotus with their hands held in one of the five *mudrās* (associated with the Buddha), often carrying also a bowl in the lap. Normally such seated figures should be identified with the Dhyānī-Buddhas who are indeed very popular in Nepal and are placed in the specified directions of a *chaitya* or *stūpa*. Thus, Akshobhya with *bhūmisparśa-mūdrā* is assigned a place in the east, Ratnasambhava with the *varada-mudrā* in the south, Amitābha with the *dhyāna-mudrā* in the west and Amoghasiddhi with the *abhaya-mudrā* in the north. The place of Vairochana with the *dharmachakra*-or *vyākhyāna-mudrā* being in the centre of the *chaitya,* he is generally not represented at all, but may sometimes be shown in the south-east between Akshobhya and Ratnasambhava. It is indeed easy enough to spot the Dhyānī-Buddhas when they are shown with their respective *vāhanas* or cognizance marks, viz. *vajra* for Akshobhya, *ratna* for Ratnasambhava, lotus for Amitābha, *chakra* for Vairochana and *viśvavajra* for Amoghasiddhi. The last Dhyāni-Buddha is also distinguished by the canopy of serpent hoods under which he is often shown as seated.

Images of the five Dhyānī-Buddhas are very popular in Nepal and are found placed around the *chaityas* and *stūpas* in the appropriate directions. The lower tiers of the larger *chaityas* and *stūpas* also accommodate images of the Bodhisattvas relating to the respective Dhyānī-Buddhas. Since the concept of the Dhyānī-Buddhas gained popularity after the eighth century, their images found in Nepal are obviously later and generally post-date the eleventh century and gain greater vogue under Vajrayāna.

OTHER BUDDHIST GODS

Besides the Buddha and the Dhyānī-Buddhas, many of the gods and goddesses affiliated to them received adoration in Nepal. Of the Bodhisattvas the most popular was

Padmapāṇi Avalokiteśvara who in due course became fused with Lokeśvara with numerous forms. Padmapāṇi was also identified with Matsyendranātha who together with Paśupatinātha constituted the national gods of Nepal, adored alike by the Buddhists and the Hindus. Maitreya, the future Buddha and an emanation of the Dhyānī-Buddha Vairochana, and Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī as the presiding god of wisdom and learning, ranked next in popularity to Padmapāṇi.

Among other gods who receive popular worship in Nepal, prominent were Jambhala and Vighnāntaka, the Buddhist versions respectively of Kubera and Gaṇeśa, Heruka, Hevajra, Samvara, Chaṇḍaroshana and Hayagrīva.

Tārā, the Śakti of the Dhyānī-Buddha Amoghasiddhi, was pre-eminent among the female divinities and has numerous forms. Other popular goddesses were Bhṛikuṭī, Jāngulī, Ekajaṭā, Nairātmā, Mārīchī, Vasudhārā, Prajñāpāramitā, Kurukullā and the five deities of the Pañcharakshā group.

BODHISATTVAS

LOKEŚVARA

Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, also called Padmapāṇi, is the most popular Buddhist divinity of Nepal where he is commonly known as Lokeśvara. Avalokiteśvara is well known in the Mahāyāna pantheon as a Bodhisattva of Dhyānī Buddha Amitābha who rules over the present *kalpa*. He is specially popular as the god *par excellence* of compassion who refused *nirvāṇa* until all created beings had attained salvation.

Of all Bodhisattvas, Lokeśvara Padmapāṇi is the earliest to be represented in Nepal. There is a highly artistic inscribed[1] image of the god labelled as *Bhagavata Āryāvalokiteś-varanātha* at a dry hiti at Gana Baha near the Central Jail, Kathmandu. The god is represented standing in elegant *tribhaṅga* with the right hand stretched in *varada* and the left holding a lotus stalk bent like a bow. Made of lime-stone, the image bears a crest-figure of Amitābha and is flanked on proper right by a kneeling male devotee (with head mutilated) carrying a bunch of lotus flowers. Palaeographically and stylistically this image is assignable to the sixth century and is the earliest representation of the god in the Valley. His figure appears on the prismatic *chaitya* at Dhvaka Baha, Kathmandu (pls. 93, 100B) (*circa* seventh century) where he is standing in elegant *ābhaṅga* with his right hand stretched in the *varada-mudrā* and the left hand, placed on the knot of his scarf, holding a winding lotus stalk. Padmapāṇi is flanked on the right by a kneeling female devotee.

From the ninth century, however, Lokeśvara Padmapāṇi is flanked by two female attendants, instead of one, with their hands held in the *añjali-mudrā* and their divine status indicated by the nimbate heads and their lotus seats which often emanate from the same stalk as the larger lotus over which Lokeśvara stands. Further, the *mukuṭa* of Padmapāṇi

[1] At the time of restoration the inscribed pedestal has been fixed below the standing figure of Buddha (face mutilated) dating from *circa* eighth century.

now bears normally an effigy of the presiding Dhyānī-Buddha Amitābha. Thus the figures from Kathesimbhu, Kathmandu and Gahiti near Yampi Bahā, Patan, belonging to *circa* ninth century, bear effigies of Amitābha on the crest, while a contemporary figure from Yangu Baha, Patan, omits the crest figure. A similar image from Changu Narayana, without the crest figure, is obviously later and may belong to *circa* eleventh century.

The bronze figure of Lokeśvara Lokanātha, seated in *padmāsana,* from the Hiraṇyavarṇa Mahāvihāra,[1] Patan, may be identified as such from the figure of Amitābha on the crest, even though the lotus stalk is missing from the left hand. With its handsomely proportioned body and well-chiselled oval face with aquiline nose, thick lower lip, half-closed eyes and expression of compassionate grace and meditative calm, this bronze ranks among the masterpieces of Nepalese art and is assignable to *circa* eleventh-twelfth century.

Two standing bronze figures of Padmapāṇi, one assigned by Kramrisch[2] to the ninth-tenth century and the other[3] attributed to the tenth-eleventh century, are of fairly ornate style showing the right hand in the *varada-mudrā* and the left holding the lotus stalk, but these do not appear to be earlier than the twelfth century. Another standing bronze Padmapāṇi[4] is even more ornate and has been correctly dated to the twelfth-thirteenth century and is comparable with an equally ornate and almost contemporary figure of the god illustrated by Kramrisch.[5]

Two inscribed sculptures labelled as Lokeśvara, one dated NS 720 (AD 1599) and the other dated NS 797 (AD 1676) come from Svayambhūnātha. The former shows the usual type of standing Padmapāṇi unaccompanied by any attendant but with Amitābha shown on the crest. The latter shows Padmapāṇi flanked by two seated female divinities of which the right one represents four-armed Shaḍaksharī in *vajra-paryaṅkāsana* with the main pair of hands in the *añjali-mudrā* and the remaining hands holding rosary and lotus flower. The goddess represented on the left flank is two-armed Tārā seated in *lalitāsana* with the hands held in the *varada* and *abhaya,* carrying a lotus stalk each.

A figure of Lokeśvara-Lokanātha, seated in *padmāsana,* with the right hand in the *varada-mudrā* and the left kept on the left thigh and each hand holding a lotus stalk, comes from Kirtipur. This sculpture is assignable to the seventeenth century and is comparable iconographically with an inscribed image of seated 'Lokeśvara' from a *chaitya* behind the Rudravaraṇa Mahāvihāra at Patan, which with its flamboyant background may date from the eighteenth century.

We also have Lokeśvara sculptures accompanied by figures of Tārā. One such from Kirtipur of *circa* seventeenth century represents standing Lokeśvara flanked on each side by a figure of Tārā seated in *lalitāsana* and carrying *varada* and *abhaya* with the blue lotus

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[1] Stella Kramrisch, *Art of Nepal,* fig. 20, frontispiece

[2] *Ibid.,* fig. 12

[3] *Art of India and Nepal: Nasli and A. Heeramaneck Collection* (October, House Inc., New York, 1967), fig. 83

[4] *Ibid.,* fig. 89

[5] Stella Kramrisch, *op. cit.,* fig. 19

held in each hand by the stalk. An elaborate stele from Thahiti Bazar, Kathmandu, assignable to *circa* sixteenth-seventeenth century represents standing Lokeśvara accompanied by five figures. In the upper field two inscribed female figures flank the diademmed head of the god and are seen seated in *lalitāsana*. The right one is Tārā labelled as *Pratisarā*, carrying the usual *varada* and *abhaya* with the lotus stalk. The left figure is exactly identical with the right one and bears an illegible inscription. In the lower field the god is flanked by two male attendants, each standing in *svastika-pāda*. The right attendant holds the hands in the *vyākhyāna-mudrā*, carrying also a blue lotus by the stalk. The left one holds a *vajra* with both hands and may represent Vajrapāṇi. Above the halo of the god is represented Dhyānī-Buddha Amitābha seated on a projecting lotus pedestal.

There is an unusual sculpture of Lokeśvara from Godavari showing the god bearing an effigy of Amitābha on the crest and standing in *samabhaṅga* on a lotus-seat with both hands stretched down in the *varada-mudrā*. Four pot-bellied Sūchīmukhas are represented flanking the feet and the lotus pedestal of the deity, receiving currents of *amṛita* flowing from the two hands and the two feet of the god. This interesting sculpture is assignable to *circa* eighteenth century.

Lastly, we may notice a wooden stele representing a Lokeśvara figure with his Śakti. Lokeśvara here is four-armed and carries *varada, chakra, triśūla* and *padma,* the lower left hand being kept on the thigh of his Śakti (Tārā) who carries *varada* and *abhaya*. The divine couple is flanked by a female divinity carrying *varada* and *abhaya* on the right and by Mañjuśrī carrying sword and book on the left. The halo is flanked by a Vidyādharī carrying garland. Above the halo is represented Dhyānī-Buddha Amitābha seated on a projecting lotus pedestal and canopied by a crown. This wooden figure, now in the National Museum, Kathmandu, may date from *circa* sixteenth century.

The *Sādhanamālā* has furnished thirty-eight *sādhanas* describing a variety of forms of Avalokiteśvara of which the following forms are available in Nepal :—

1. Shaḍaksharī Lokeśvara: The images of this god independently as well as in groups abound in Nepal but one of these dates earlier than the twelfth century. The god, represented as four-armed with his principal pair of hands in the *añjali-mudrā* and carrying in the remaining hands rosary and lotus flower, may be accompanied by a male and female companion with similar attributes. An independent coloured image of this divinity of a late date bearing Amitābha on the crest, occurs at Bodhnath.[1]

2. Siṁhanāda Lokeśvara: This god is fairly popular in Nepal and the important monasteries at Patan have two images of this divinity on either side of the staircase leading to the sanctum. According to the *sādhana* (*Sādhanamālā*, p. 63) he is two-armed and without ornaments and is seated on a lion in *mahārāja-līlāsana*. On his right there is a trident entwined by a snake, while from his left hand rises a lotus on which there is a sword burning like fire.

A large bronze image of *circa* eighteenth century set up in the courtyard of the Machhendranath Temple, Kathmandu, conforms to the *sādhana* but replaces the *triśūla*

[1] B. Bhattacharyya, *Buddhist Iconography* (Calcutta 1924), first edition, pl. XIX, *c*

by *tridaṇḍī*. A smaller bronze image of the deity from Nepal[1] is without the lion-mount, while a standing sculpture of the god from Patan[2] is also known.

3. Lokanātha Lokeśvara: Four *sādhanas* are devoted to this god in three of which he is represented alone, while in one he is accompanied by Tārā and Hayagrīva. He is represented as seated in *lalita, paryaṅka* or *vajraparyaṅka* and is two-armed carrying *varada* and lotus flower. The only difference between Lokeśvara and Lokanātha is that while Lokeśvara is depicted standing, Lokanātha is always represented in a seated attitude.

4. Hālāhala Lokeśvara: The Nepal images faithfully conform to the text (*Sādhanamālā*, pp. 65-66), and show this god with three faces and six hands seated in *lalitāsana* and embracing with his lowest left hand Tārā who is seated in his lap. He carries *varada* and *akshamālā* in his two lower right hands and wields arrow with his upper right hand, while he holds bow and lotus flower in his two upper left hands, the lowest embracing his Śakti. There is a fine sculpture in the National Museum, Kathmandu, dated NS 838 (AD 1718) of the above description. A sculpture in Svayambhūnātha of a comparable date bearing an effigy of Amitābha on the crest even shows the trident entwined by a serpent on the right of the god as required in the text. A standing stone image of this god without Śakti is illustrated by Bhattacharyya.[3]

5. Sukhāvatī Lokeśvara: This god is very popular in Nepal and has normally three faces and six arms and is seated in *lalitāsana* with his Śakti. The iconography of this Lokeśvara differs from that of Hālāhala Lokeśvara only in respect of the attitude of one of the left hands. According to the text, one of the left hands (naturally the lowest one) should rest on the thigh of his Śakti *(Tārā)*. In practice, however, one of the left hands (in most cases the uppermost one) of this god carries a book, while two others carry bow and lotus flower, like those of Hālāhala Lokeśvara.

In Nepal this Lokeśvara is often represented as eight-armed, the extra pair of hands being held in the *añjali-mudrā*. The other right hands hold *varada*, rosary and arrow, while the other left hands hold lotus, bow and book.

6. Hari-Hari-Hari-Vāhana: This image making a triple pun on the term *Hari* and showing superiority of Lokeśvara over Vishṇu is absent in India and is rare even in Nepal. There is only one sculpture at Svayambhūnātha and a bronze figure in a monastery at Patan and both of them follow the textual description (*Sādhanamālā*, page 77) faithfully. This Lokeśvara has one face and six arms and rides on Vishṇu (Hari) as Garuḍāsana. Garuḍa who is also called *Hari* is seated on a lion which is also known as *Hari*.

There is a modern bronze image of this deity in the National Museum, Kathmandu, which shows the god with the attributes different from those given in the text. In bronze the god is represented eight-armed, carrying *abhaya, varada, tridaṇḍī* and rosary in the four right hands and book, *pāśa*, lotus flower and vase in the four left hands.

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[1] *Ibid.*, pl. xx. *a*

[2] *Ibid.*, pl. xix. *e*

[3] B. Bhattacharyya, *op. cit.*, fig. 109

7. Rakta Lokeśvara: According to the text, this deity is red in colour and is four-armed, carrying *pāśa* and *aṅkuśa* and bow and arrow and is accompanied by two goddesses Tārā and Bhṛikuṭī. Images of this deity are rare but a few have been found in the Kva Bahal at Patan.

8. Māyājālakrama Lokeśvara: This is the only fierce form of Lokeśvara known to the Indian Buddhists. According to the text (*Sādhanamālā*, page 86) he stands in *pratyālīḍha* attitude and has five faces and twelve arms, bearing mostly war weapons. His statue can be seen in Nepal at Syambhūnātha.

9. Nīlakaṇṭha Lokeśvara: According to the text this god is represented without ornaments seated in *vajra-paryaṅkāsana* with his hands carrying a bowl of jewels and with the effigy of Amitābha on the crest. He is flanked by two serpents. A coloured image of this god is found in the Bodhnāth Temple in Nepal, where he is shown without serpents.

10. Sugatisandarśana: Representations of this god are rare in Nepal. According to the text (*Sādhanamālā*, page 88) he is to be represented as standing with six arms, carrying *varada, abhaya* and rosary in the three right hands and lotus, water-pot and *tridaṇḍī* in the three left hands. It will be seen that these attributes are given also to Amoghapāśa Lokeśvara who is however shown with an extra pair of hands, one of them carrying the distinguishing attribute of *pāśa*.

11. Pretasantarpita: This god is very similar to Sugatisandarśana and is likewise six-armed exhibiting *varada* and *abhaya* poses in the first pair of hands; the jewel and the book in the second pair and the rosary and the *tridaṇḍī* in the third pair. A bronze image of fourteenth century illustrated by Kramrisch[1] and shown standing as six-armed, carrying *varada, tridaṇḍī* and rosary in the right hands and lotus, water-pot and book in the left hands, may well represent this god.

12. Padmanarttesvara: True to the textual prescription, this god is represented on a sculpture in Svayambhūnātha dancing in *ardhaparyaṅkāsana* with one face and eighteen arms carrying a lotus flower in all the hands. The god is flanked by a kneeling devotee on the proper right with hands held in the *añjalī-mudrā* and a god seated in *sukhāsana* on the left with the right hand held in the *stuti-mudrā* and the left hand holding what looks like a staff. This image is assignable to *circa* seventeenth century. Padmanarttesvara is only occasionally found in Nepal.

Sculptures of the following forms of Lokeśvara, which are not mentioned in the iconographical texts are also available in Nepal :—

Amoghapāśa Lokeśvara: Although no textual prescription is available for this god, he is quite popular in Nepal. Bhattacharyya thus describes the painted representation of this god at the Machhendra Bahal, Kathmandu :

"Amoghapāśa Lokeśvara. He is four-faced and eight-armed and stands on a lotus. He carries in his four right hands the *vajra,* the sword, the goad and the bow, while the four left carry the Ghaṇṭā, the Tridaṇḍi, the noose and the arrow.'[2]

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[1] Stella Kramisch, *op. cit.*, fig. 25

[2] B. Bhattacharyya, *op. cit.*, p. 428, No. 71

The sculptural representations of this god found in Nepal, however, are different from Bhattacharyya's description as will be clear from the following description of an inscribed image of the deity dated NS 722 (AD 1601) found at Svayambhūnātha.

"The god stands in *ābhaṅga* with his principal right hand held in the *vyākhyāna-mudrā* carrying a jewel *(ratna)*. The remaining right hands carry *varada, pāśa,* and *abhaya*. The left hands hold *pustaka, tridaṇḍī, kamala* and *kalaśa*. He is flanked by a two-armed standing attendant on each side, that on the right carrying *abhaya* and bowl of offerings and that on the left having hands in the *añjali-mudrā*. Below the feet of the god is represented a two-armed figure depicted as flying or dancing in the posture of the terrific god Chaṇḍaroshaṇa."

Another sculpture of a comparable date from Svayambhūnātha replaces the *tridaṇḍī* held in the left hand by a bow.

A modern brass image of the deity exhibited in the National Museum, Kathmandu, not only replaces the *tridaṇḍī* by the bow but also replaces the *ratna* by the rosary and carries *abhaya*. in the first pair of hands; *varada* and lotus in the second pair; bow and *pāśa* in the third pair; and rosary and book in the fourth pair. It will be seen that in all the representations *pāśa* is invariably present and it may be due to this attribute that the god was called Amoghapāśa.

Chintāmaṇi Lokeśvara: An inscribed image labelled Chintāmaṇi assignable to *circa* eighteenth century is found in the Svayambhūnātha, representing Lokeśvara standing in *svastika-pāda*, with the right hand carrying a *chakra* and the left hand raised head high to clasp the foliage of a tree under which the god stands in the attitude of Māyādevī, in the Nativity scene. The god is flanked by two kneeling devotees. A painted representation of Chintāmaṇi Lokeśvara, illustrated by Bhattacharyya[1] from Machhendra Bahal, however, is different and shows the god holding a *chaitya* in the right hand and the left hand kept near his navel.

MAÑJUŚRĪ

Mañjuśrī, considered as one of the most important Bodhisattvas, appears to have been a human personality who was deified in *circa* fourth century AD. According to the *Svayambhū Purāṇa* Mañjuśrī was a great saint who came from China to pay homage to the self-born Ādibuddha who manifested himself as a flame of fire on a lotus in a large lake in Nepal. He succeeded in approaching the flame with great difficulty and to make the god accessible to all, he cleft asunder with his sword the southern barrier of the waters and drained the lake, causing the formation of the Nepal Valley. Mañjuśrī erected a temple over the flame of fire, identified as the Svayambhūnātha, and took his abode on an adjacent hill, now known as the Mañjuśrīsthāna or Sarasvatīsthāna and after sometime returned home and attained Bodhisattvahood.

Be that as it may, Mañjuśrī is one of the most prominent Bodhisattvas, who is alternately considered as an emanation of Dhyānī-Buddha Amitābha, Akshobhya or

[1] B. Bhattacharyya, *op. cit.*, p. 430, No. 94

all the five Dhyānī-Buddhas. Generally holding the sword and the book of *Prajñāpāramitā* as distinctive attributes, Mañjuśrī has 41 forms covered by as many *Sādhanas*. The following representations are more popular in Nepal:—

Nāmasaṅgīti

The commonest variety of the god in Nepal is seated in *Vajraparyāṅka* and has one head and four hands holding sword and *Prajñāpāramitā* and bow and arrow. The *sādhana*, however, attributes to this god three heads which are rarely represented in Nepal.

Vāk or Amitābha Mañjuśrī

Showing allegiance to Dhyāni-Buddha Amitābha, this form of Mañjuśrī is two-armed and seated in *dhyānāsana* and differs from the representation of Amitābha only in being decked with ornaments.

Vāgīśvara

Widely worshipped in Nepal, this form is two-armed and seated in *ardhaparyāṅka* on a lion, holding blue lotus in the left hand and the right hand displayed artistically (in an image of Kathesimbhu this hand is held in *abhaya*). A Pāla sculpture in the Indian Museum shows this god seated on a lion-throne in place of lion, holding a bell in the right hand and a blue lotus in the left.

Mañjughosha or Dharmadhātu-Vāgīśvara

He is the principal god in the *Dharmadhātu-Vāgīśvara-maṇḍala* (*Nishpannayogāvalī*, p. 64) and is shown four-headed and eight-armed carrying *dharmachakra-mudrā* in the principal hands and the sword and the book, bow and arrow and *vajra* and bell in the remaining hands. A sculpture of this description is found at Kathesimbhu.

According to a *dhyāna* (*Sādhanamālā* p. 128) *Dharmadhātu-Vāgīśvara* sits in *lalitāsana* and is four-faced and eight-armed, holding bow and arrow, noose and goad, book and sword and bell and *vajra*. This differs from the previous form in replacing *dharmachakra-mudrā* by noose and goad.

Arapachana

This is by far the most popular form showing the god seated in *vajraparyāṅka* and two-armed holding the book and the sword. According to the *sādhanas* he is accompanied by four companions, Keśinī, Upakeśinī, Chandraprabha and Sūryaprabha, but these are generally omitted in Nepal.

Mañjuvara

This is also a two-armed form of god seated in *lalita* or *ardhaparyāṅka* with hands in the *dharmachakra-mudrā*, distinguished by the book on the lotus. The *vāhana* lion is optional. He may be accompanied by his wives Keśinī and Upakeśinī and sometimes by Sudhanakumāra and Yamāntaka.

MAITREYA

Maitreya partakes of the nature of both a Bodhisattva and a Mortal Buddha though he is not yet a Buddha and is supposed to be passing the life of a Bodhisattva in

the Tūshita heaven, preparatory to his descent to earth in the human form. Worshipped alike by the Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna sects, his images are traced in India right from the Kushana period but in Nepal his representations are available only from the eighth century onwards.

Maitreya is normally represented as a princely figure holding a lotus stalk in the right hand and recognized by a *chaitya* shown on his crown. His hands are sometimes shown in the *dharmachakra-mudrā* and there is usually a vase or a stem of flowers *(nāga-kesara)* supporting a vase. Alternately he may be depicted as a Buddha.

According to the *Sādhanamālā,* p. 560, Maitreya is three-faced and four-armed carrying *dharmachakra-mudrā*, *varada* and *nāgakesara* flower and is seated in *vajraparyāṅka*. This form is known to the Nepalese *chitrakāras.*[1]

It is likely that of the two identically standing Buddha figures shown on the prismatic *chaitya* from Dhvaka Baha (seventh century), one represents Maitreya. There is, however, an undoubted representation of Maitreya as a Bodhisattva on the eighth century prismatic *chaitya* from Nag Baha, Patan showing the god standing in *tribhaṅga* wearing *jaṭāmukuṭa* adorned with a *chaitya* and holding rosary and a flask. An ornamented bronze figure of Maitreya of *circa* ninth century from the Heeramaneck Collection shows the god standing in exaggerated *tribhaṅga*, holding vase in the left hand and the empty right hand (which may have held rosary), raised to the chest. A silver image of Maitreya in the collection of the National Museum, Kathmandu, which is assignable to a date not earlier than the twelfth century, depicts the god seated in *ardhaparyaṅka,* holding *nāgakesara* flower in the right hand and flask in the left hand, with the *chaitya* on his crown.

Images of Maitreya seated like the Buddha in *pralambapādāsana* are also known from the ninth century onwards.

MINOR BUDDHIST GODS

Images of the following Buddhist gods, mostly of the Tāntric forms, are also available in Nepal :—

Chaṇḍaroshaṇa : According to the *Sādhanamālā* (p. 172) he is a fierce god represented as squint-eyed and two-armed carrying sword and *tarjanī-pāśa*. According to the Nepalese Tāntric tradition he is to be represented in the *yab-yum* and worshipped in secret.

Heruka : He is a popular god worshipped singly as well as in *yab-yum*, the latter form known as Hevajra. He stands in dancing attitude in *ardhaparyāṅka* carrying *vajra* and *kapāla*. A *khaṭvāṅga* with flowing banner leans against his left shoulder.

Hevajra : Invariably accompanied by Prajñā, he is known in several forms. In two-armed form he holds *vajra* and *kapāla* and is accompanied by Nairātmā.

In four-armed form he holds *vajra,* sword, *khaṭvāṅga* and is accompanied by Vajravārāhī.

[1] B. Bhattacharya, *op. cit.*, 1968, fig. 47

In six-armed form with three faces he holds *vajra,* arrow and trident in the right hands and bell, bow and skull-cup in the left hands and is shown embracing Vajraśriṅkhalā carrying *vajra* and *ghaṇṭā.*

In sixteen-armed form with eight faces and four legs he crushes four Māras, viz. Skandha-māra (Brahmā), Kleśa-māra (Vishṇu), Mṛityu-māra (Maheśa) and Devaputra-māra (Indra). His two legs are poised in the *ardhaparyāṅka* and the other two in *ālīḍha.* In this form he embraces his Śakti Nairātmā.

Sambara : Sambara, also embraced by his Śakti Vajra-vārāhī is another variety of Hevajra. He is shown as either two-armed or twelve-armed with four faces and both the forms carry *vajra* and *ghaṇṭā* and trample upon Bhairava and Kālarātri and stand in *ālīḍha* posture.

Jambhala : Much older than the Dhyānī-Buddhas, Jambhala was later affiliated to either Ratnasambhava, Akshobhya all the five Dhyānī-Buddhas, or even to Vajrasattva, the sixth Dhyānī-Buddha. His form varies to suit his Kuleśa, though essentially he is the Buddhist adaptation of Kubera *yaksha.*

The images of Jambhala found in Nepal mostly emanate from Ratnasambhava and represent the god as a corpulent seated figure holding citrus in one hand and mongoose, often emitting jewels, in the other.

The form affiliated to Akshobhya is fierce and known as Ucchushma Jambhala. He stands in *ālīḍha,* trampling upon Dhanada vomitting jewels and carries *kapāla* and mongoose.

An alternate variety of Jambhala affiliated to Akshobhya, embraces his Śakti and is shown with three faces and six arms carrying citrus, goad and arrow in the right hand and *āliṅgana,* mongoose, and bow in the left hand.

Vighnāntaka : This god vanquishing Gaṇeśa (Vighna) stands in *pratyālīḍha* and is two-armed, carrying *vajra* and *tarjanī-pāśa.*

Vajrahuṅkāra, Trailokyavijaya and Vajrajvālānalārka : Like Vighnāntaka there are other aggressive Buddhist gods, all standing in *ālīḍha* or *pratyālīḍha.* Thus *Vajrahuṅkāra* trampling on Śiva, is two-armed carrying bell and *vajra* in the hands locked in *vajrahuṅkāra-mudrā,* while *Trailokyavijaya,* trampling on Śiva and Pārvatī, has four faces and eight arms. *Vajrajvālānalārka* is also four-faced and eight-armed and tramples on Vishṇu and Lakshmī. These gods, however, are seldom represented in Nepal.

Forms of Samvara : 1) four-headed and twelve-armed Sambara standing *pratyālīḍhāsana* with his Śakti in *Yab-yum.* The fourth head of the god is represented behind the back-slab. The first pair of hands carrying *vajra* and *ghaṇṭā* is held in *vajrahuṅkāra-mudrā* and embraces the Śakti. The second pair carries *ḍamaru* and *khaṭvāṅga* (broken); the third pair carries *triśūla* and the three-faced head of Brahmā. The fourth-pair carries axe and *pāśa.* The fifth pair carries *kartārī* and *kapāla.* The sixth pair carries *gaja-charma.* The god tramples upon Kālarātri and Bhairava. Four-armed Bhairava is folded double and carries the bowl and *vindu-mudrā* in the first pair of hands and *ḍamaru* and *khaṭvāṅga* in the second pair. Kālarātri is stretched fully and is four-armed with a skeletal frame. This stone image of *circa* eighteenth century is exhibited in the National Museum.

2) *Mahisha-Samvara* : Bronze image from Hanuman Dhoka, Kathmandu, now in the National Museum, shows thirty-four-armed, sixteen-legged, nine-headed god with the principal head of a buffalo standing in *ālīḍhāsana*. The principal pair of hands carrying *kartārī* and *kapāla* is missing. The second pair carries bow (broken) and shield. The uppermost pair of hands holds elephant hide stretched full length at the back. The remaining left hands carry arm of a human victim, the three-faced head of Brahmā, a peculiar object which looks like a large shrunken leaf (could it represent a female organ?), human leg, Tantric triangle, *pāśa*, tuft of hair of *nara-muṇḍa* (the head being worn out), serpent, *tarjanī*, bow, goad, *vajra-ghaṇṭā* and flag. All the heads are three-eyed and terrific with the hair secured by a fillet adorned with clasps of skulls, knit eye-brows, bulging eyes and gaping mouth with exposed teeth and whiskers. The god wears torque, *muṇḍa-mālā*, armlets, wristlets, bell-anklets, anklets and a *mekhalā*. He is nude and is shown as *ūrdhva-meḍhra*.

3) *Mahisha-Samvara* : Bronze image from Hanuman Dhoka, now in the National Museum, has thirty-four arms, four legs and nine heads, all terrific with the principal head of buffalo. He carries in his principal pair of hands *kartārī* and *kapāla*, in the second pair peacock feathers *(śakti)* and the three-faced head of Brahmā, and in the third pair bow and shield. The uppermost pair carries elephant hide stretched as a canopy. The remaining right hands carry goad, *vajra*, axe, iron nail, arrow, goad, peacock feathers, lotus flower, mirror, bow, double *vajra*, sickle and *ḍamaru*. The remaining left hands carry serpent, flag, *tarjanī*, horn, fire, umbrella-like *dhvaja*, flat object resembling a pair of leaves, human arm, bow, *vajra-ghaṇṭā*, an animal head with a pair of arms, *pāśa* and human legs resembling those of the previous figure. He is shown as nude and *ūrdhvaretas*, wearing *patra-kuṇḍalas*, torque and armlets. He also wears wristlets, anklets and *hāra* of snakes and a *muṇḍa-mālā*. Assignable to *circa* fourteenth century.

4) *Narasiṁha-Samvara* : Bronze image in the National Museum, has the head of Narasiṁha emitting fire. He is nude and *ūrdhva-meḍhra* and stands in *ālīḍhasana*. He is sixteen-armed. The principal pair of hands carries rosary and human head. The remaining right hands carry *kartārī*, *patakā-mudrā*, goad, arrow (tip broken off), *ḍamaru*, *triśūla* and sword. The remaining left hands carry *pāśa*, axe, serpent, bow, *gadā*, *nakulaka* and skull-cup. He wears torques and necklaces, armlets, wristlets, anklets, bell-anklets and *muṇḍa-mālā*.

TĀRĀ

Tārā is most popular among the goddesses and is worshipped in the following forms in Nepal :—

Mahāchīna : *Tārā*: Mahāchina-Tārā is also known in Buddhist Tāntric literature as Ugratārā who is worshipped as a popular deity in the Vajrayoginī temple at Sankhu in Nepal. Incorporated in the Hindu pantheon under the name of Tārā, she is regarded as one of the ten Mahāvidyā goddesses. According to the *Sādhanamālā* she is the emanation of Akshobhya and is four-armed and stands in *pratyālīḍhāsana* with a terrific appearance.

She has a corpse as *vāhana*. According to the *Tantrasāra*, she should carry sword and blue lotus in the first pair of hands and *kapāla* and *kartari* in the other pair. In popular representations in Nepal, she is shown with the same attributes as recommended in the *Tantrasāra*.

Khadiravani Tārā: As an emanation of Amoghasiddhi, she is green in colour and is commonly known as Śyāmatārā. She is two-armed and may be represented either sitting or standing and carrying *varada* and blue lotus in the hands and accompanied by two companions, namely Aśokakāntā and Ekajaṭā.

Āryatārā: Āryatārā, also known as Vaśyatārā is an emanation of Amoghasiddhi and has the same attributes as Khadiravani Tārā with this difference that she is represented seated in *pralambapādāsana*.

Sitatārā: Sitatārā is six-armed and three-faced and should be represented seated in *ardhaparyāṅkāsana*. According to the *Sādhanamālā* she carries *varada*, rosary and arrow in the right hands and blue lotus, lotus and bow in the left hands. In Nepal she is frequently represented as seated in *vajraprayāṅkāsana*.

Dhanadatārā: She is also an emanation of Amoghasiddhi and according to the *Sādhanamālā* is shown seated with four arms carrying *varada*, rosary, blue lotus and the book. She is quite popular in Nepal, her representation tallying with that given in the *Sādhanamāla*.

Vajratārā: According to the *Sādhanamālā* and the *Nishpana-yogāvalī* she is an emanation of Ratnasambhava and is four-faced and eight-armed, carrying *vajra*, *pāśa*, arrow and conch in the right hands and blue lotus, bow, goad and *tarjanī* in the left hands. According to the *Sādhanamālā* she should be surrounded by Eight Mothers. An image of Vajratāra is under popular worship at the Saraswatīsthān, close to the Swayambhū temple in Nepal.

Prasannatārā: She is also an emanation of Ratnasambhava and is represented with eight faces and sixteen arms. She carries in the right hands *khaṭvāṅga*, blue lotus, arrow, *vajra*, goad, staff, *kartari* and *abhaya* and in the left hands *pāśa* with *tarjanī*, *kapāla*, bow, *khaṭvāṅga*, *vajra*, *pāśa*, head of Brahmā and *ratnapātra*.

Mahattarītārā: She is a variety of green Tārā and is distinguished by the *vajraparyāṅkāsana* in which she sits without any companions.

Other forms of Tārā : Besides the forms mentioned above, Jānguli, an emanation of Akshobhya and Parṇaśabarī, an emanation of Amoghasiddhi, are also counted among green Tārās. Similarly, Kurukullā, an emanation of Amitābha, and Jānguli, an emanation of Akshobhya, are considered white Tārās.

Bhṛikuṭī, an emanation of Amitābha, is considered a yellow Tārā, just as Ekajaṭā, an emanation of Akshobhya, is considered a blue Tārā.

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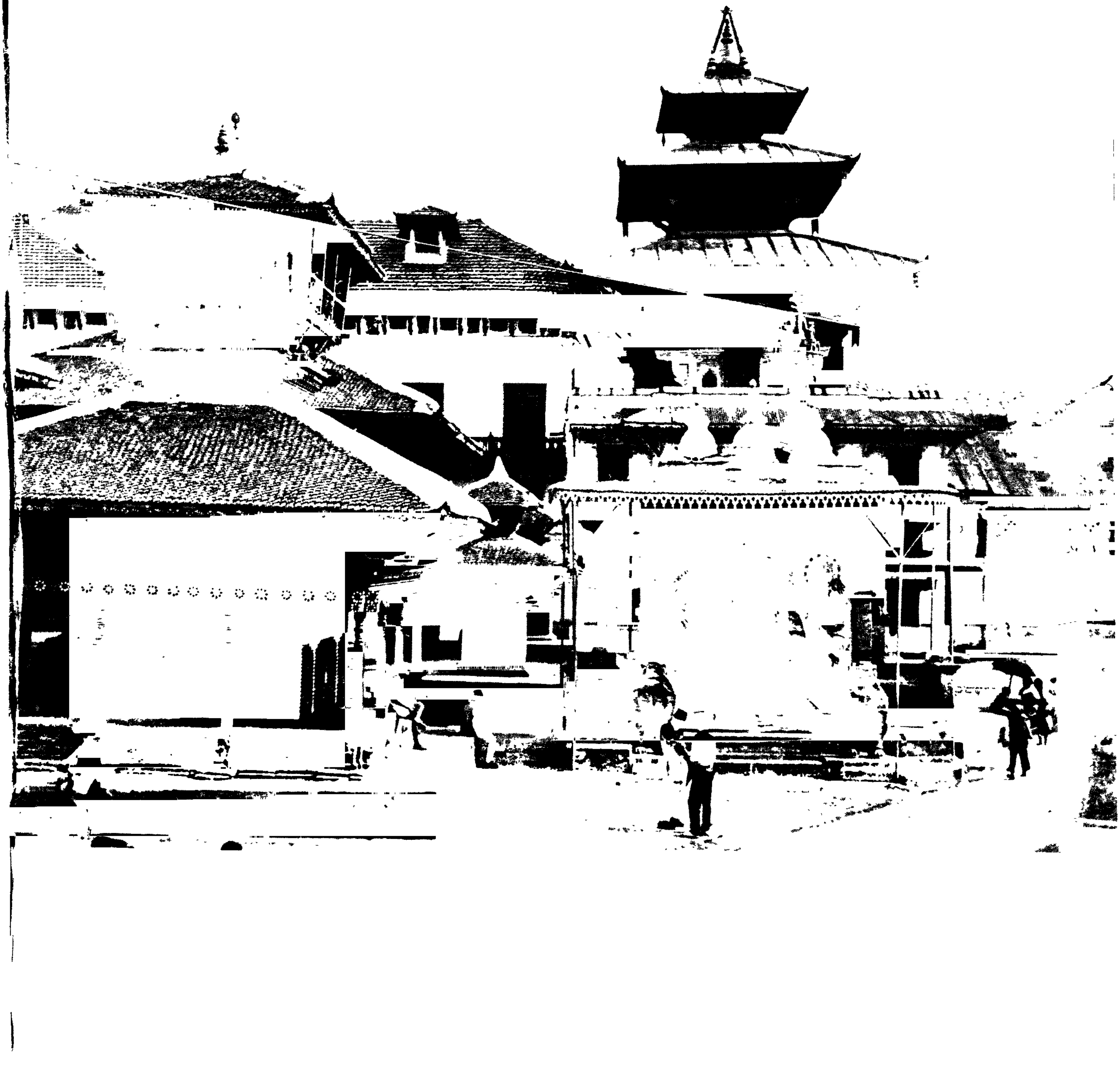

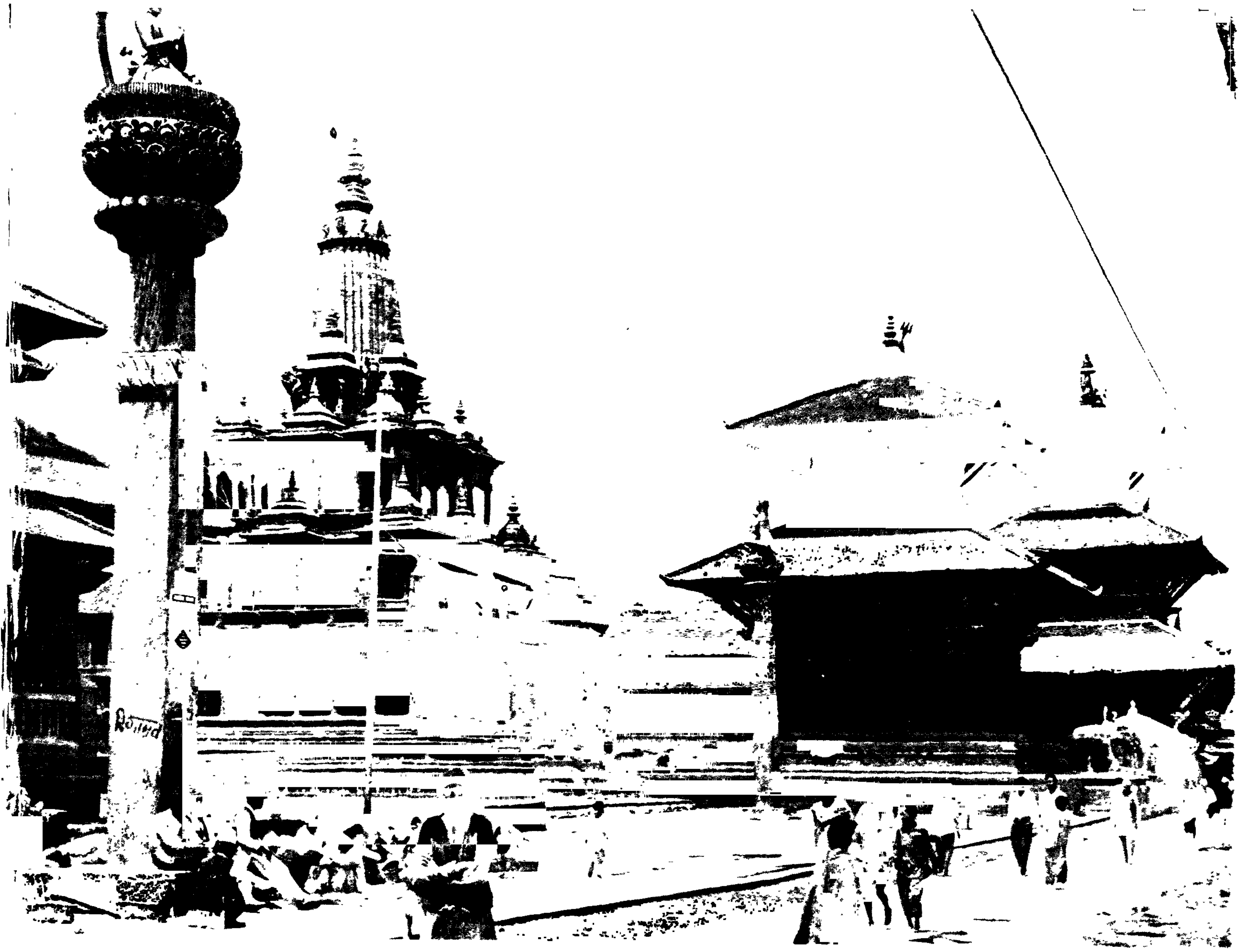

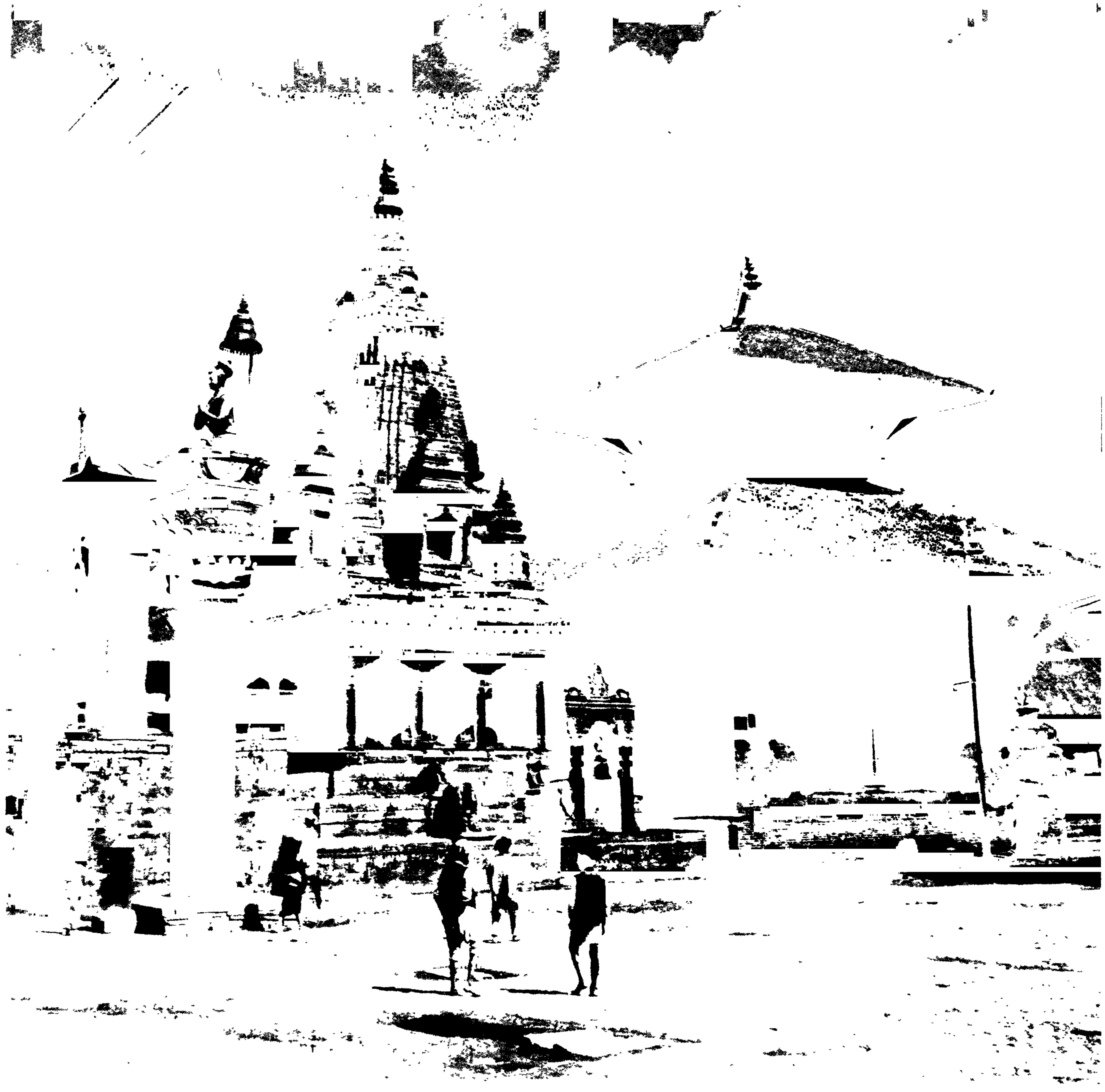

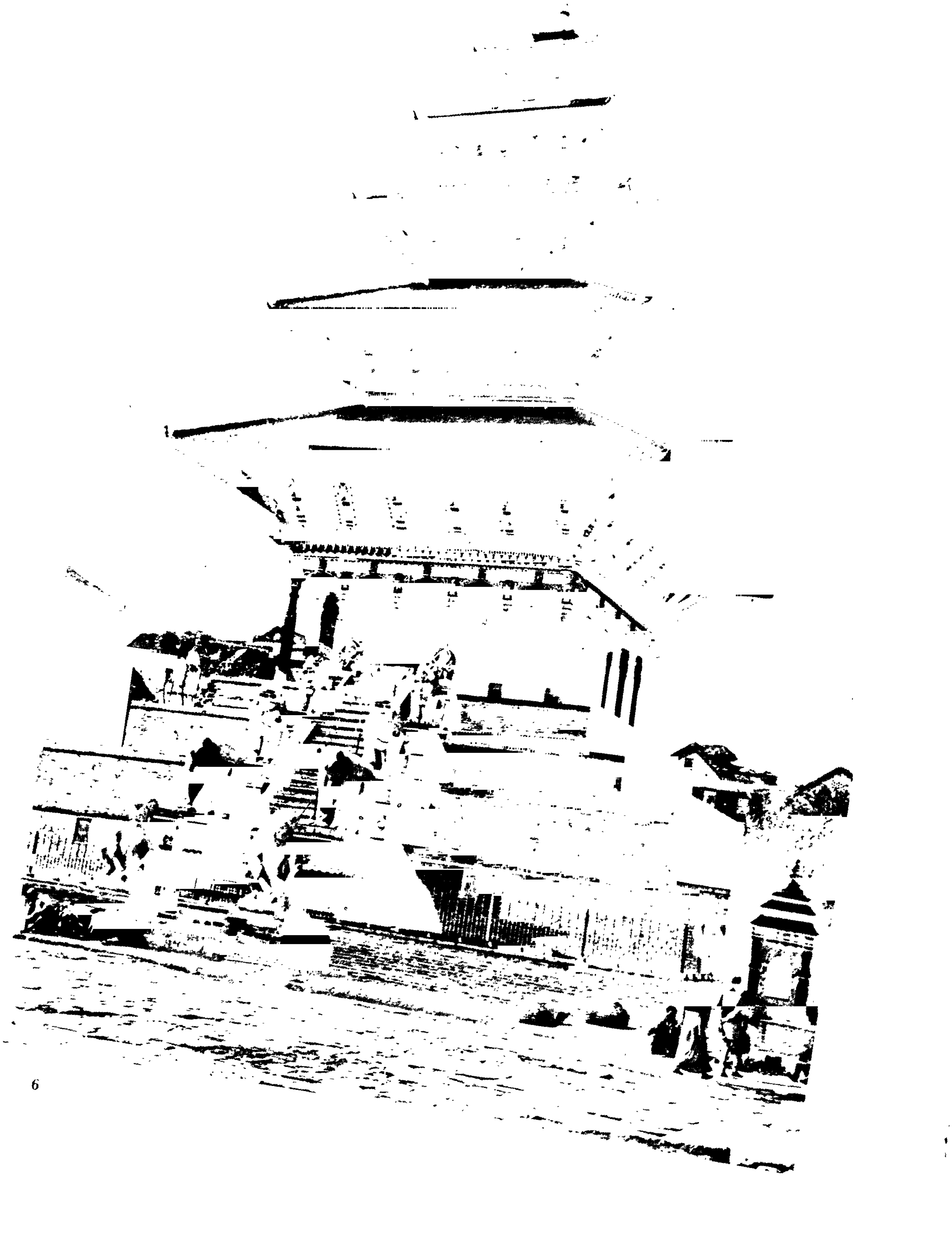

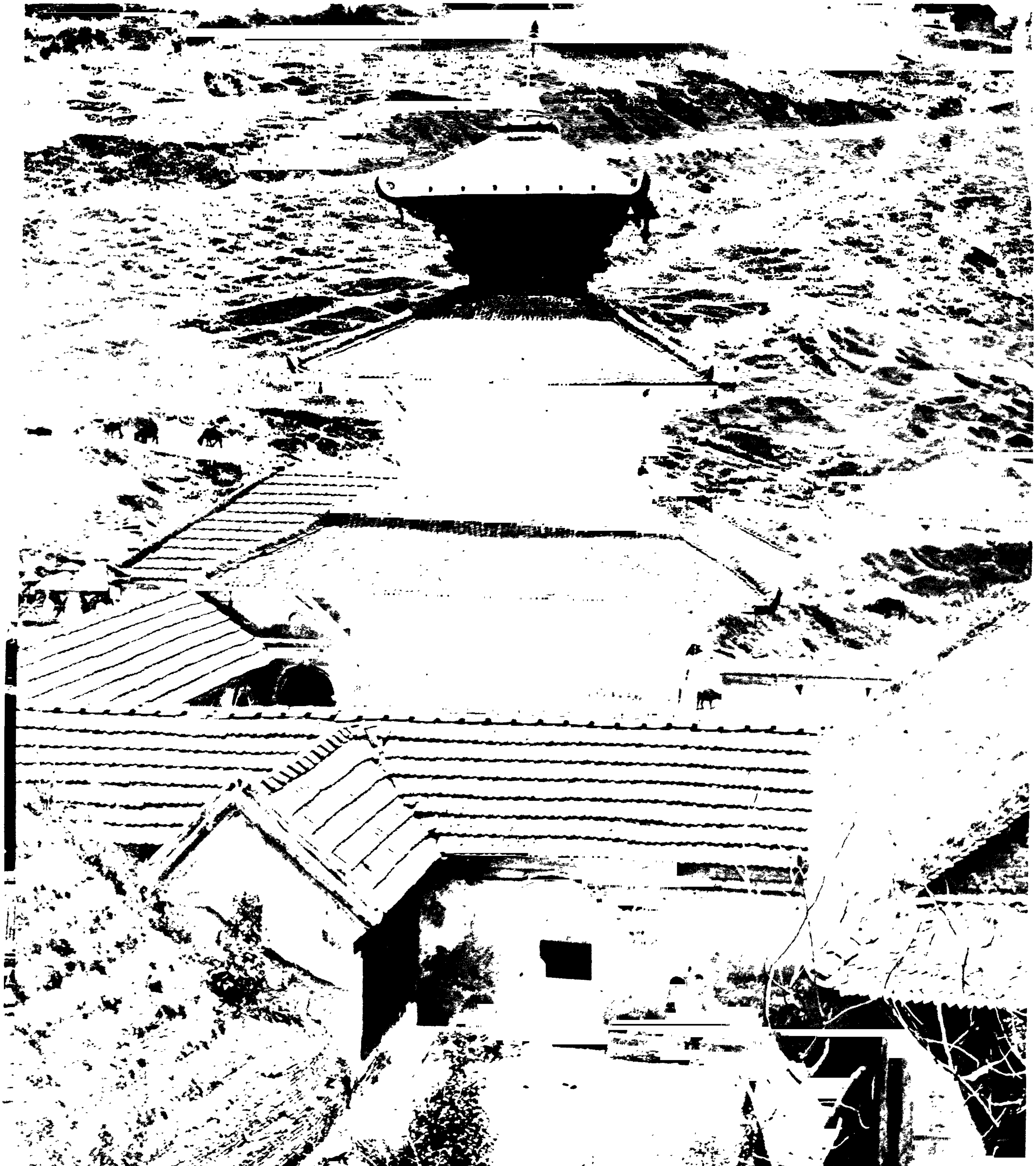

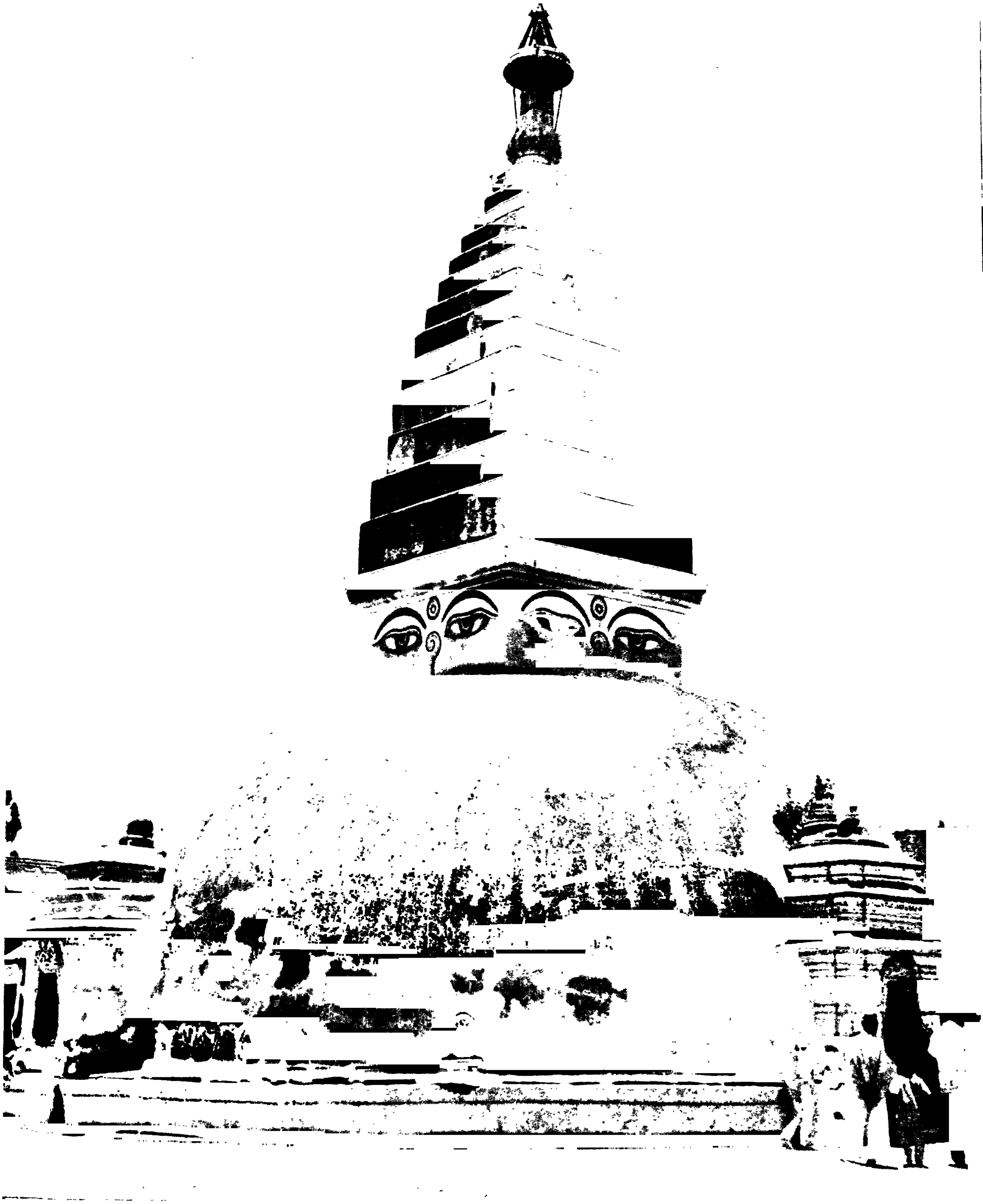

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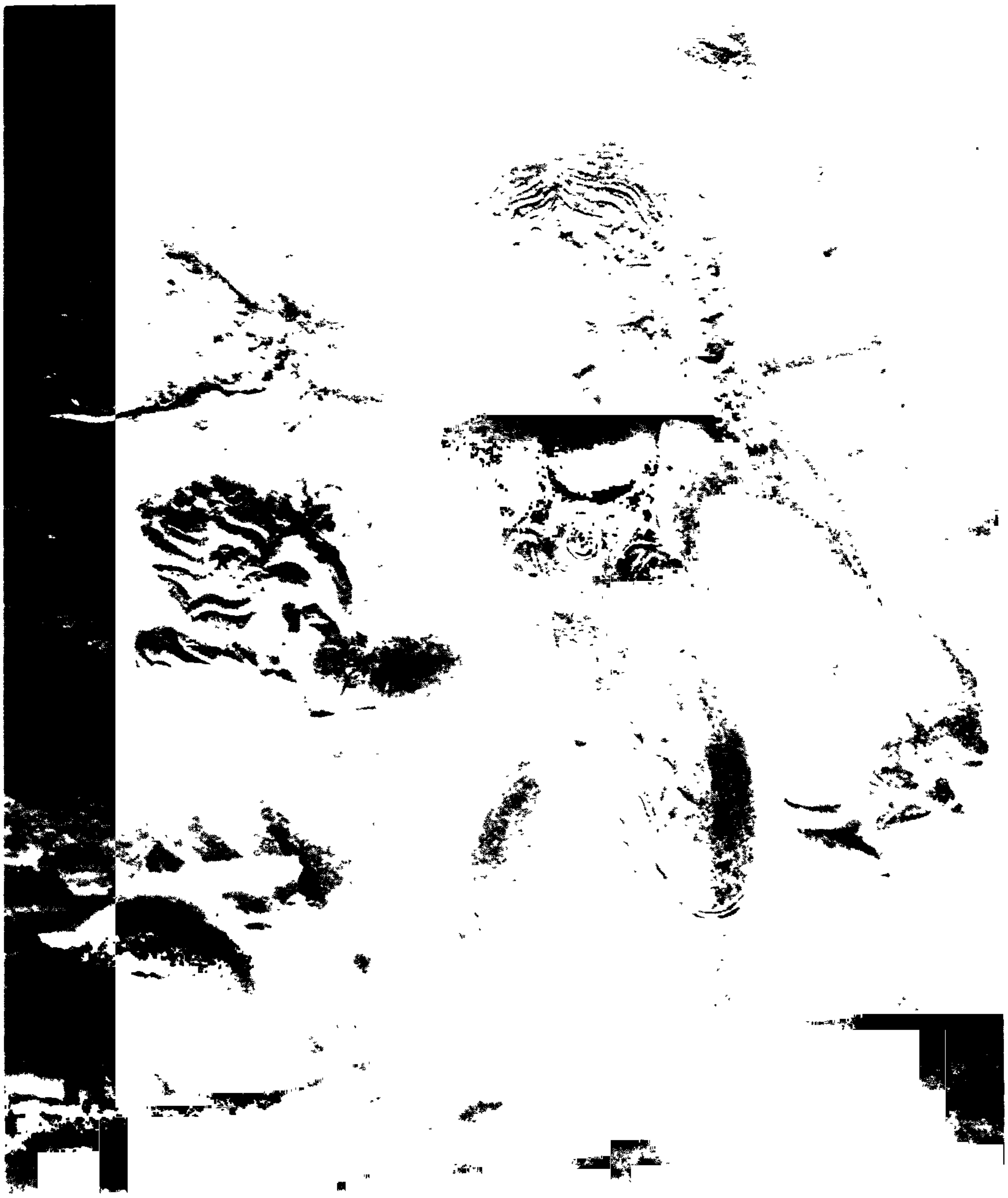

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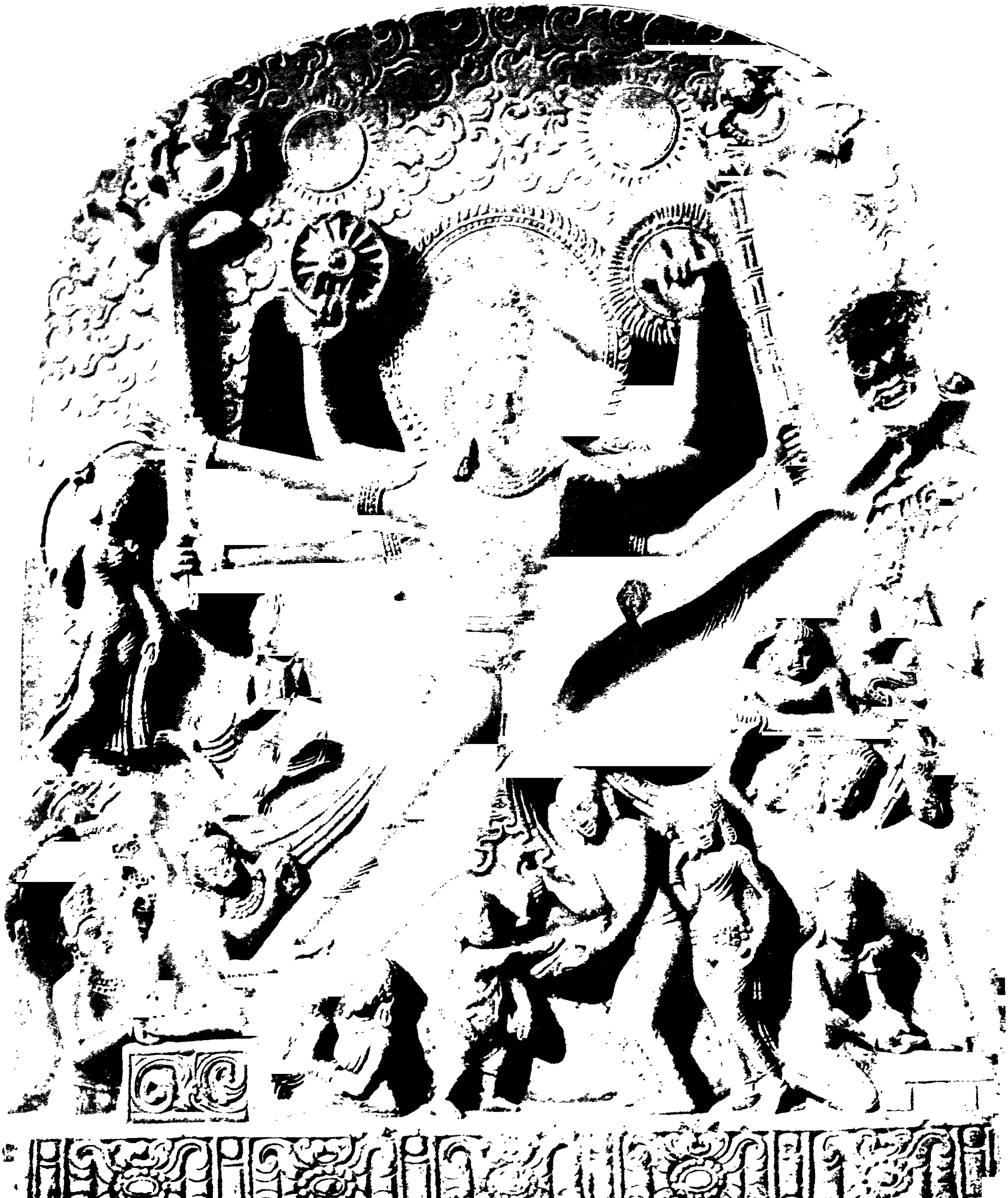

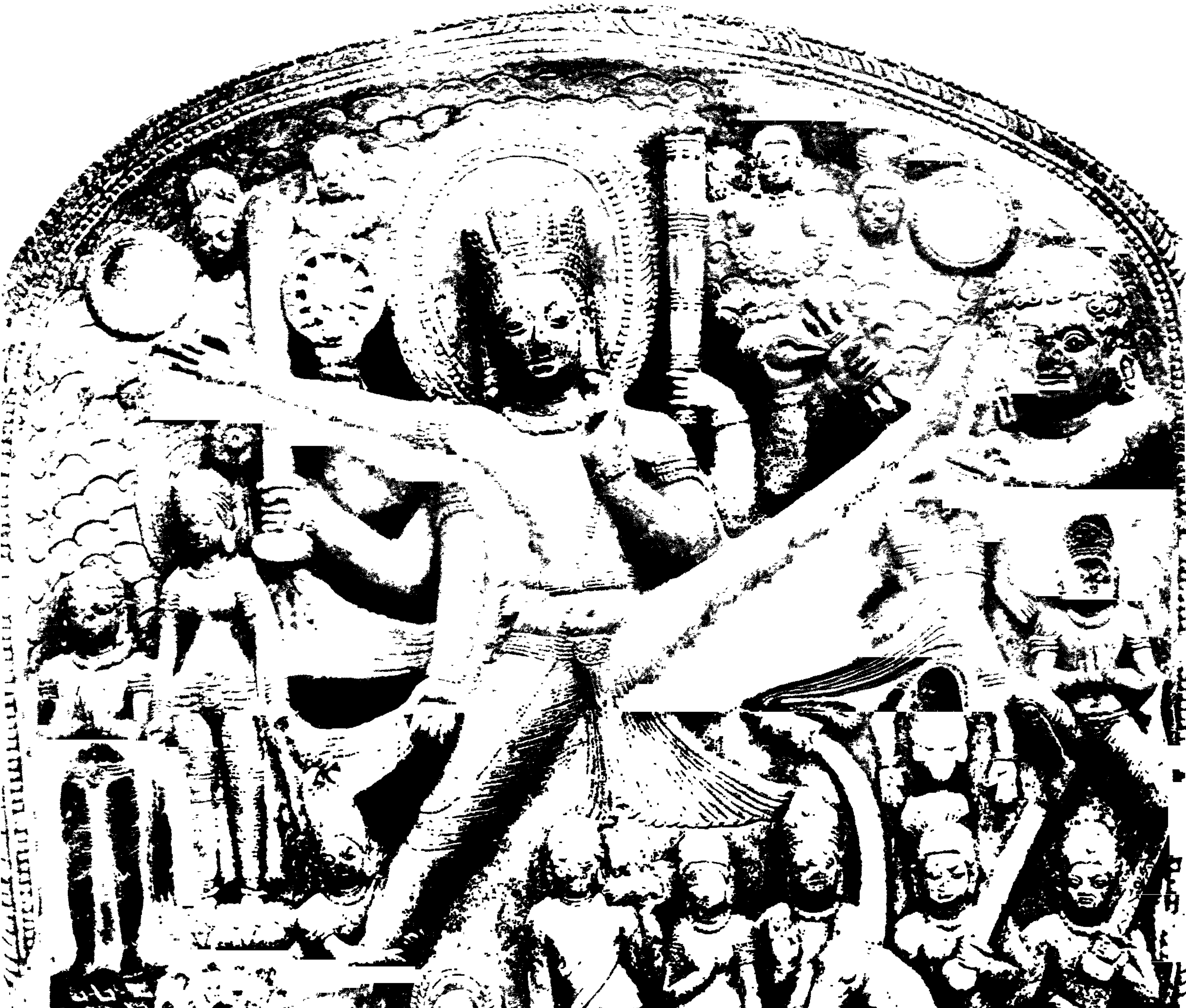

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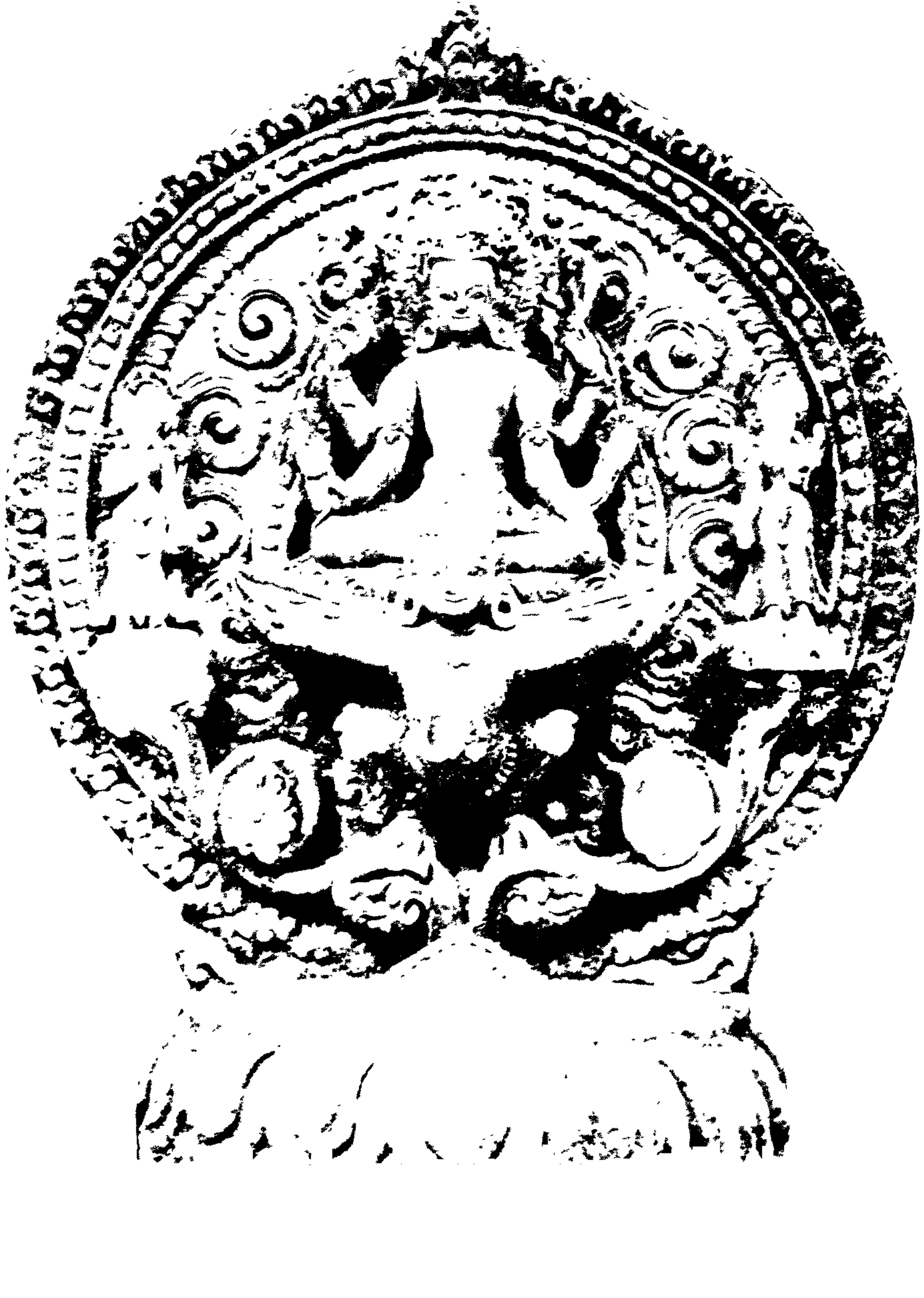

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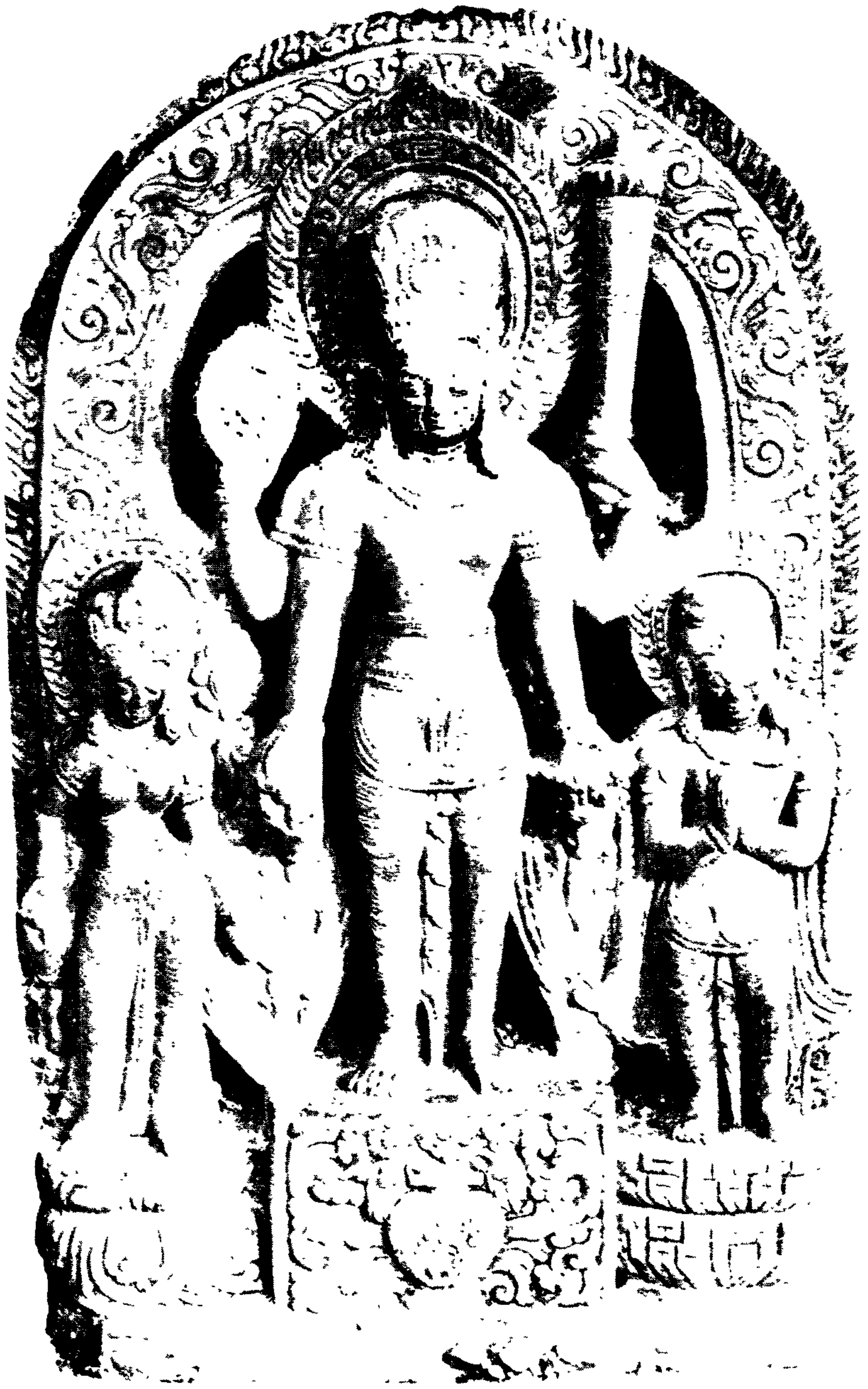

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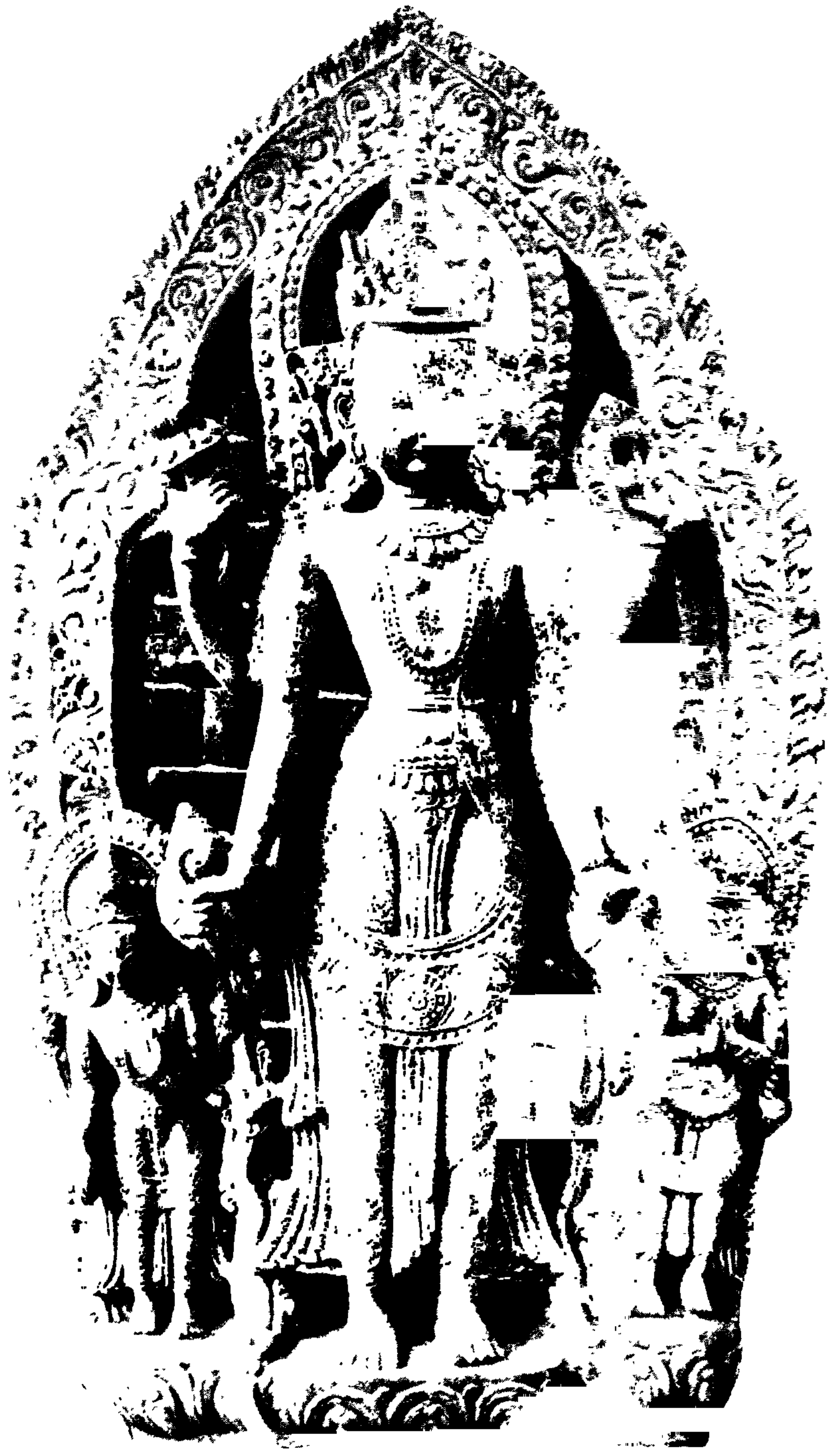

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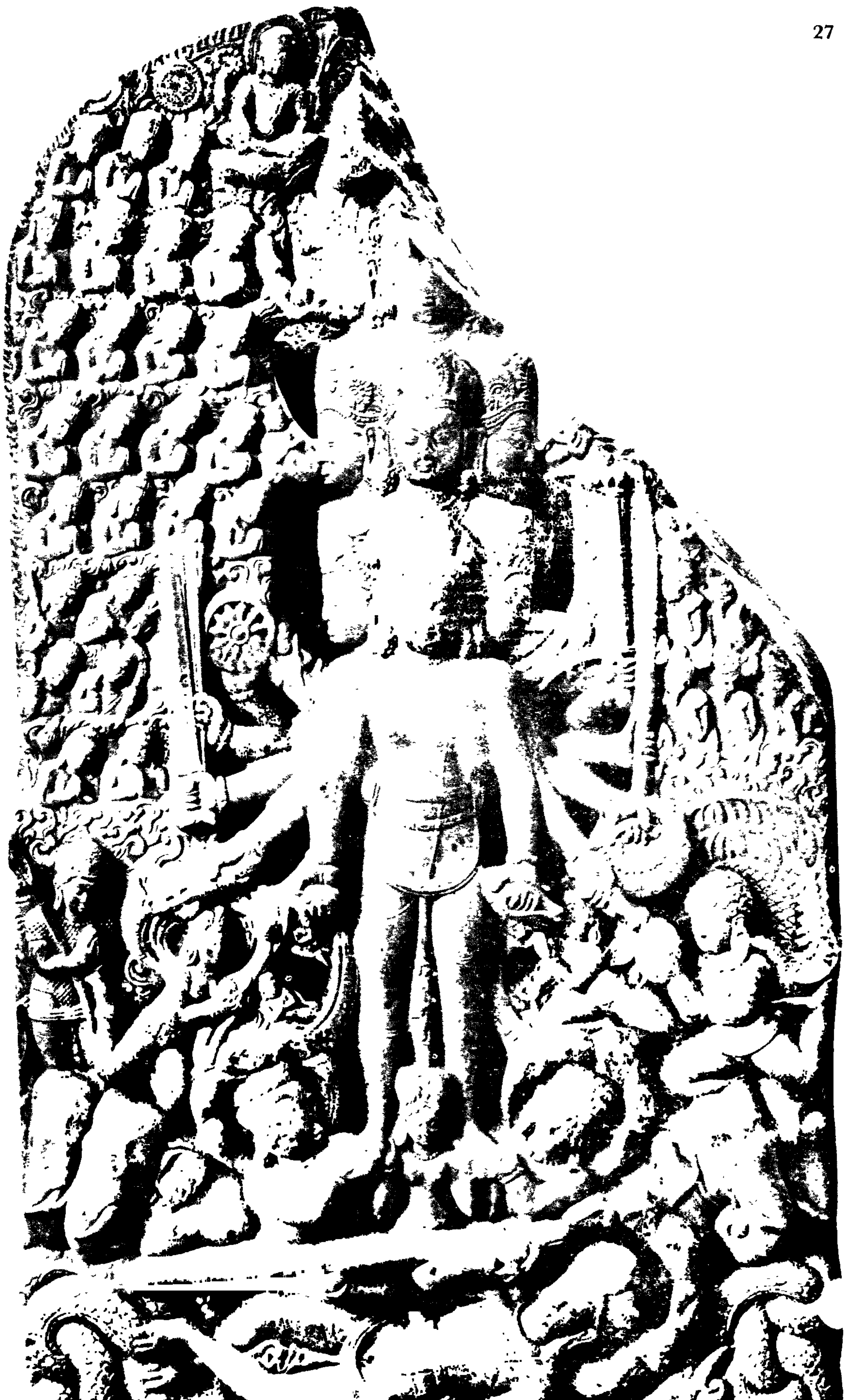

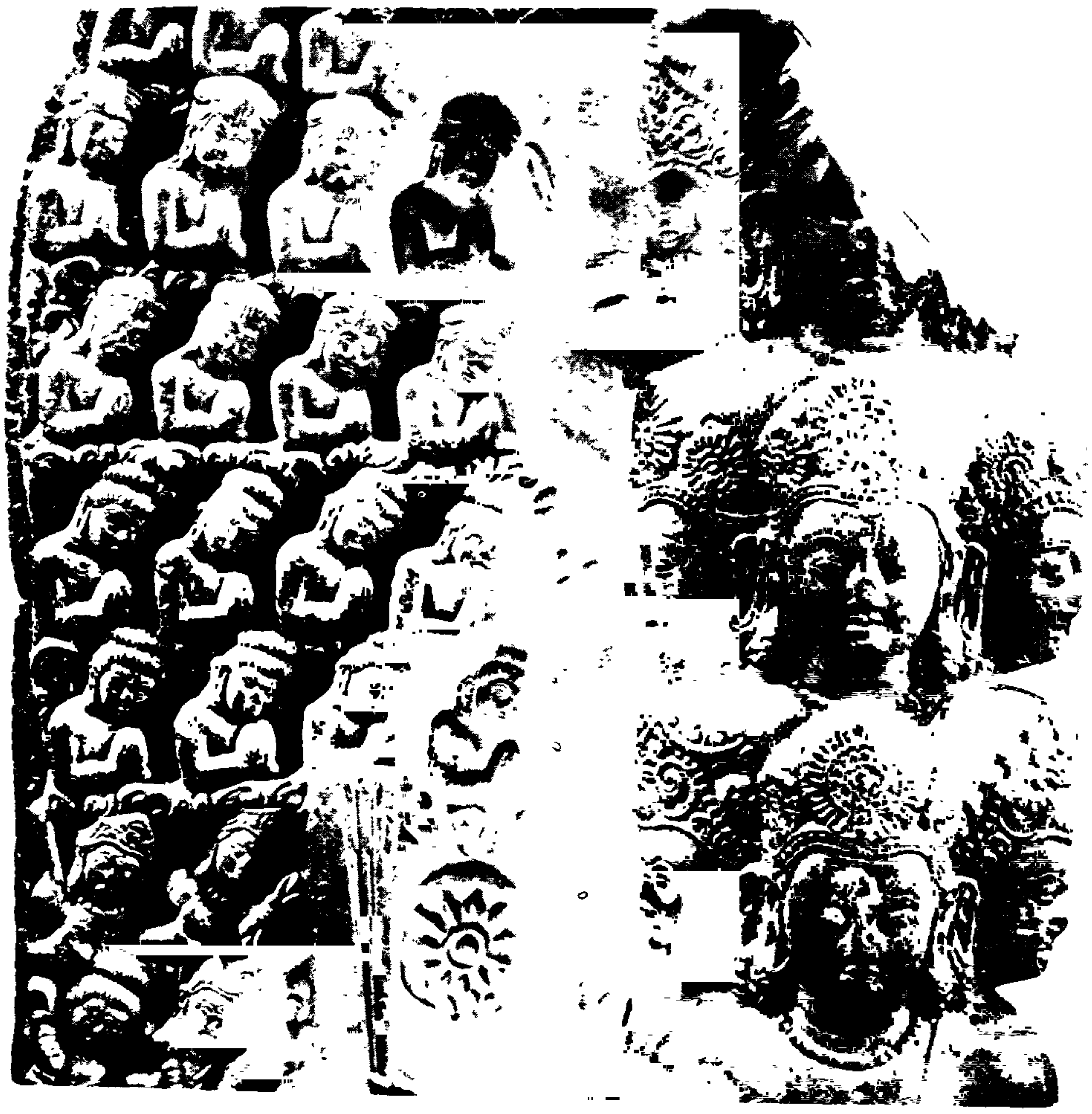

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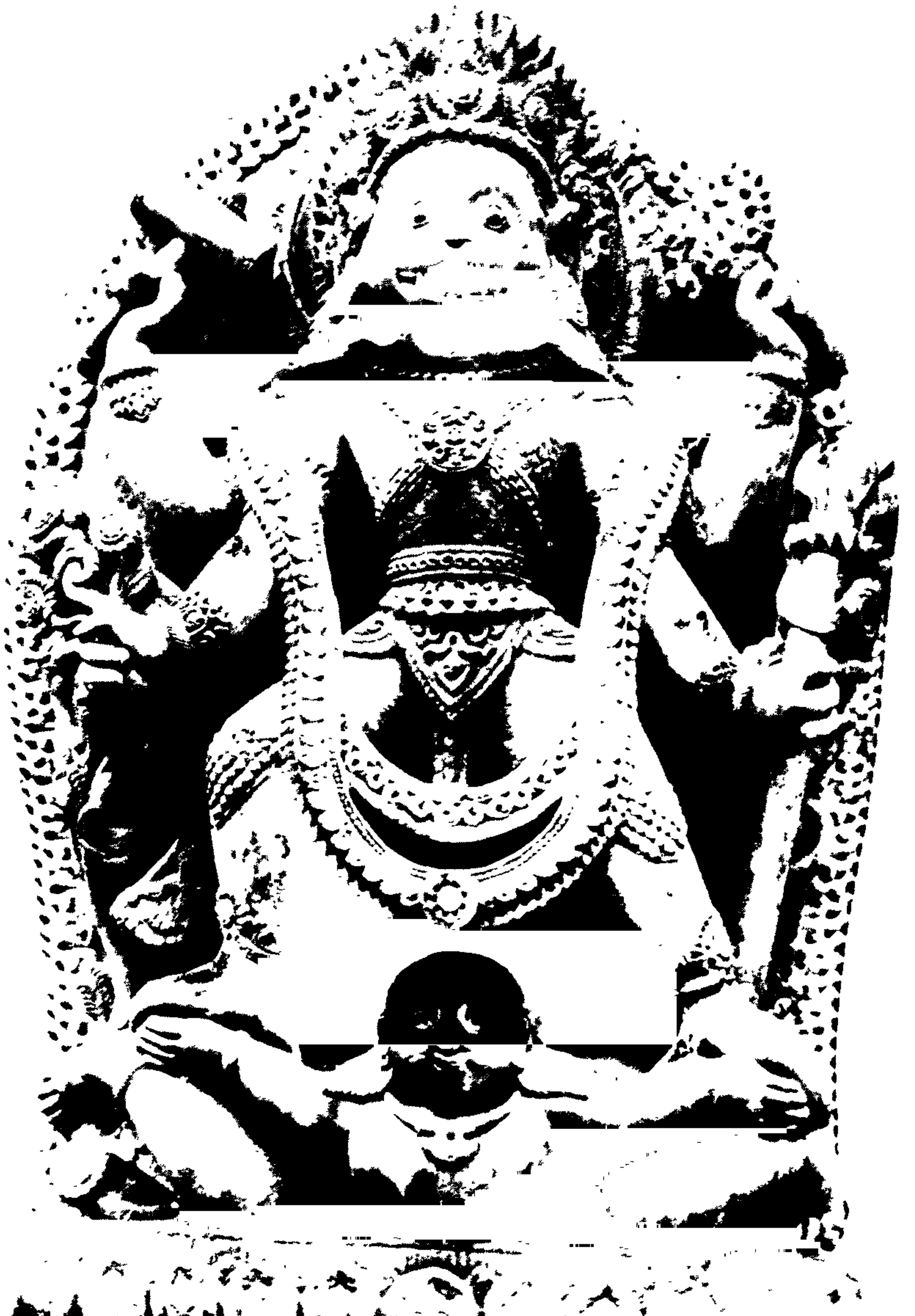

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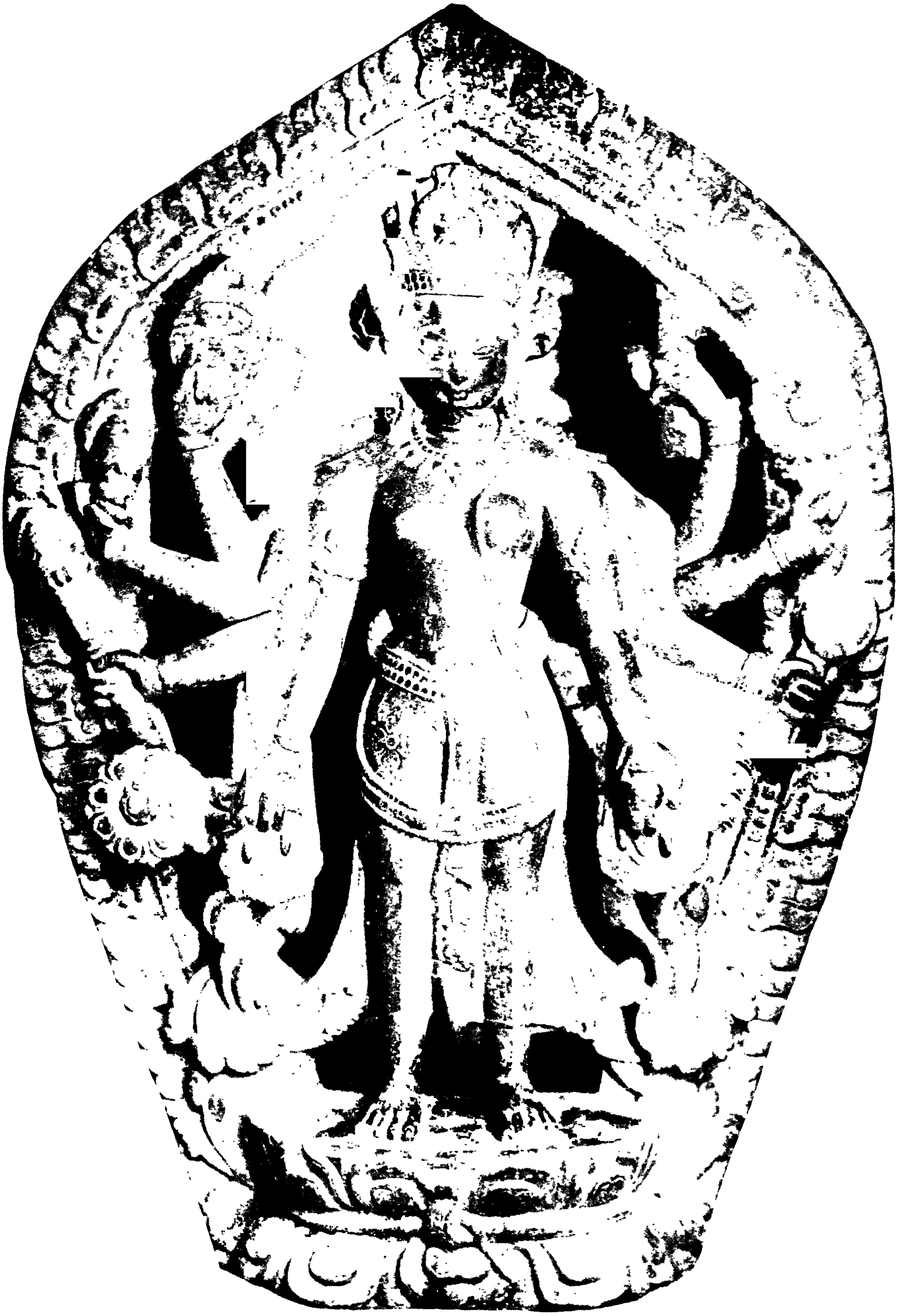

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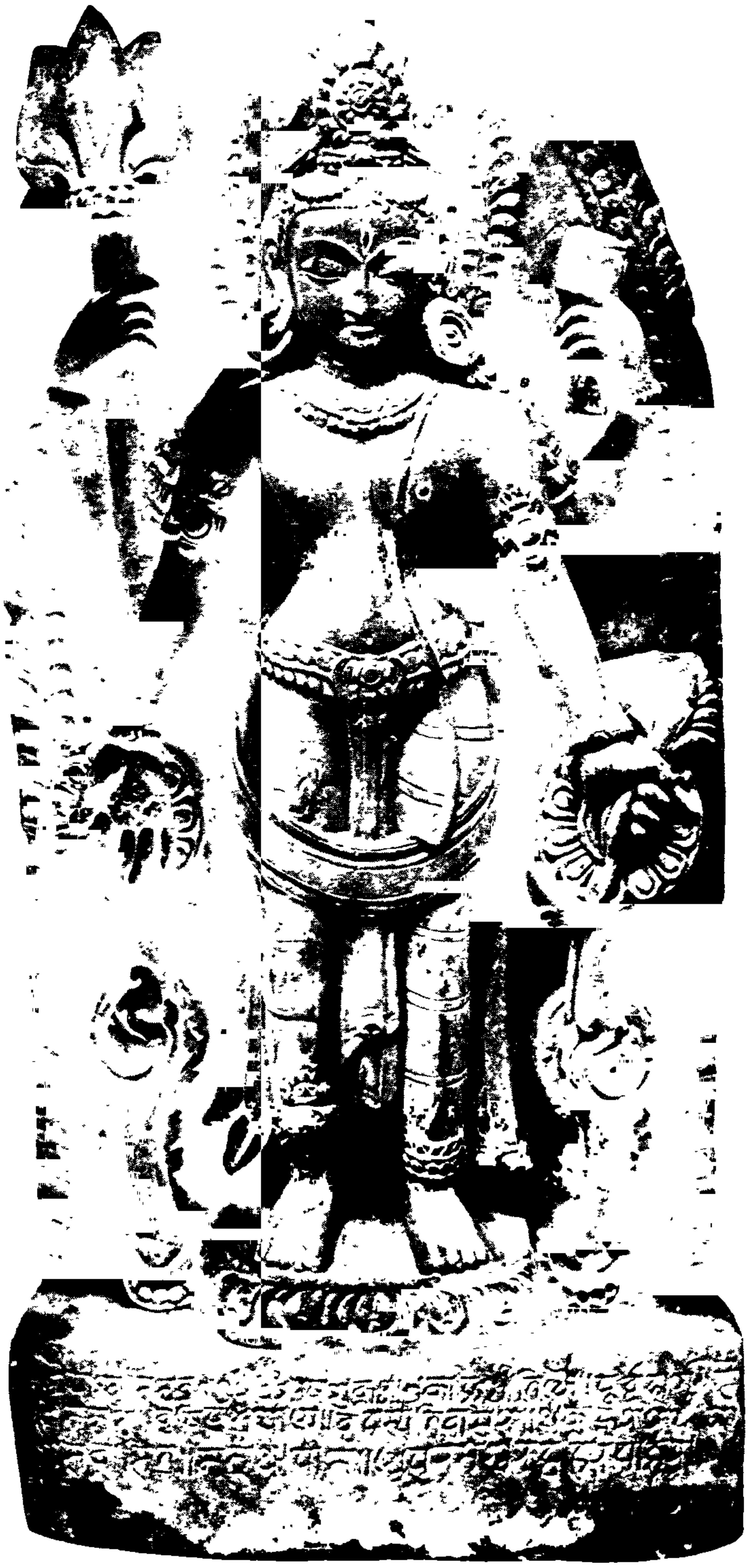

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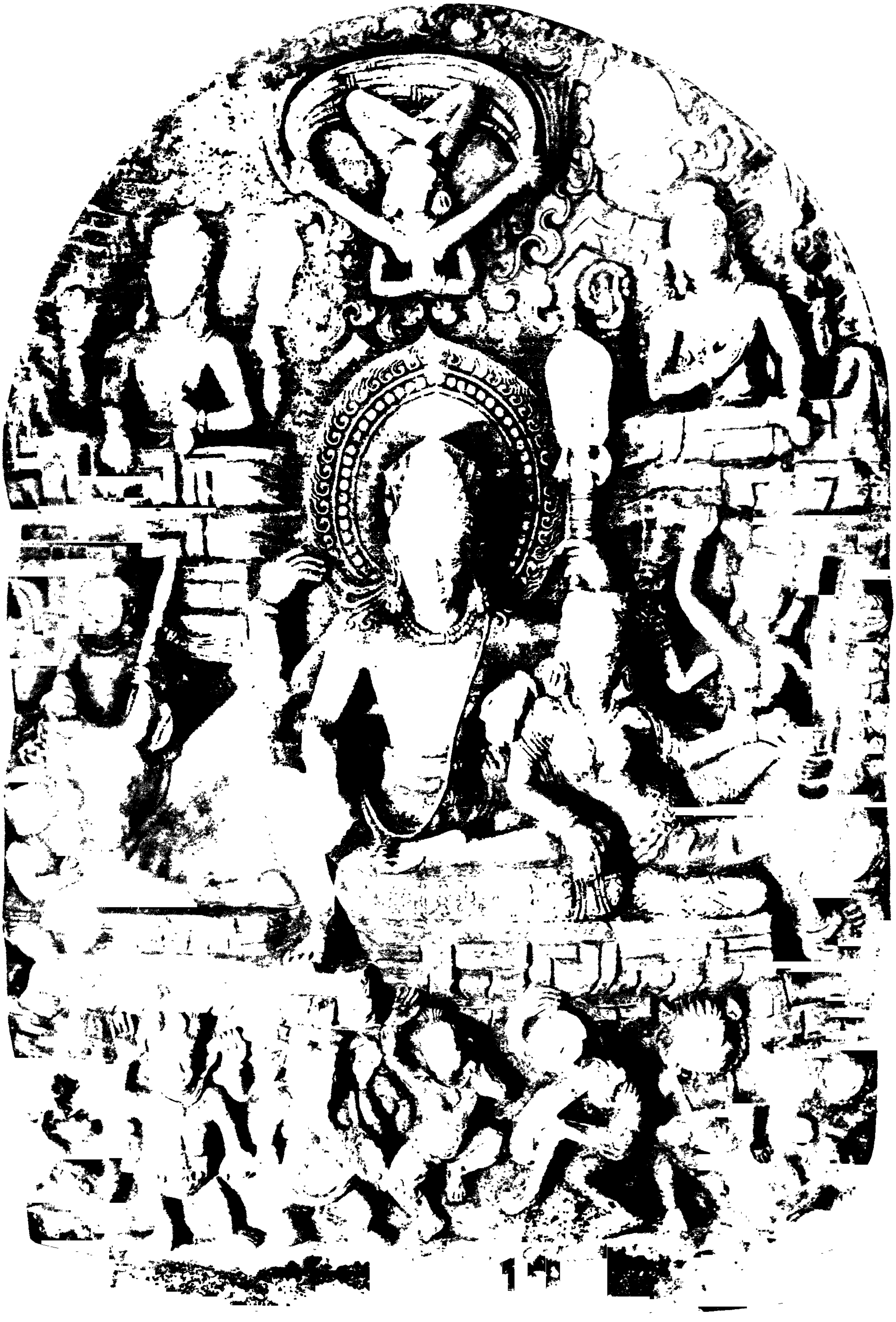

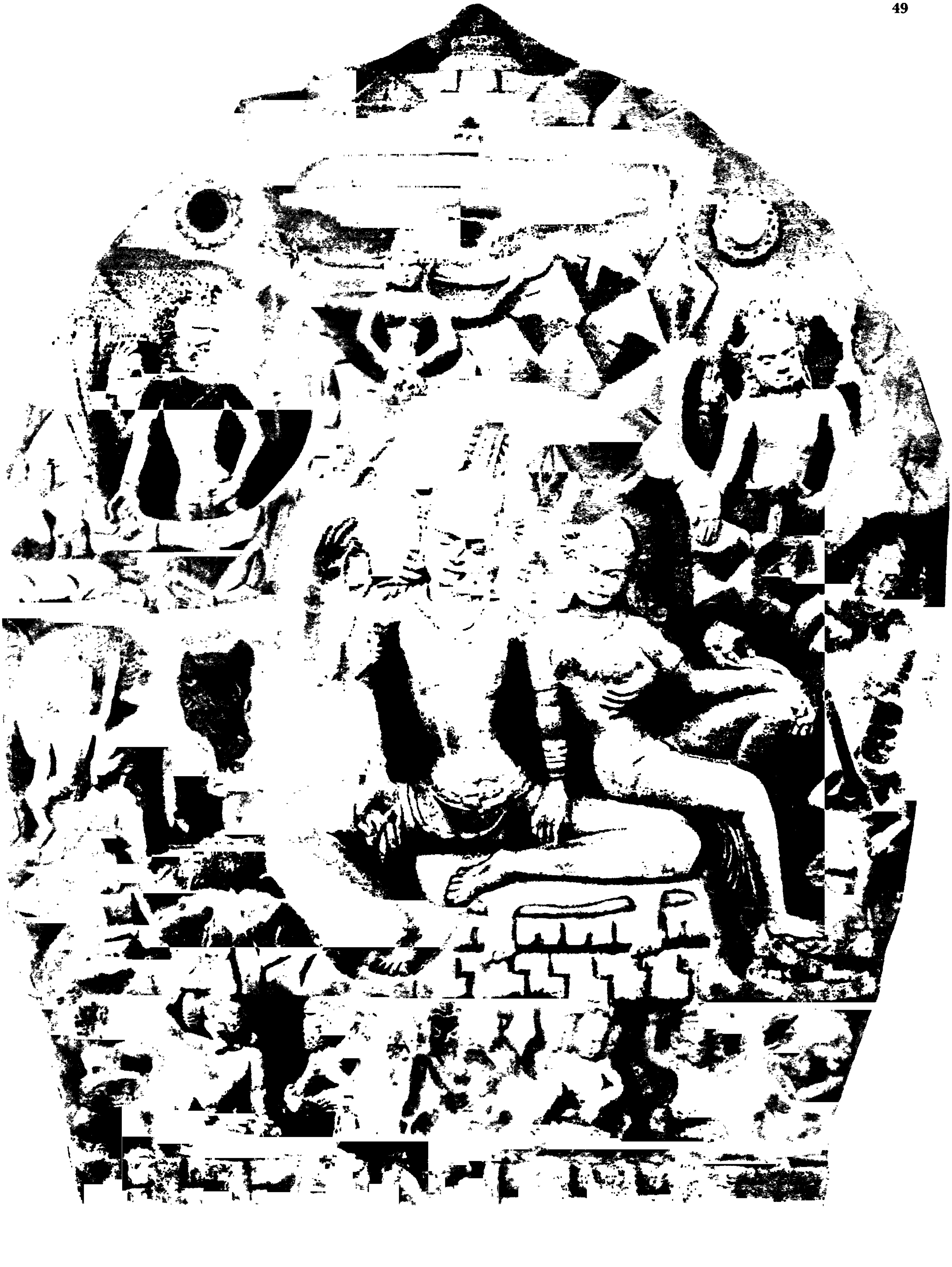

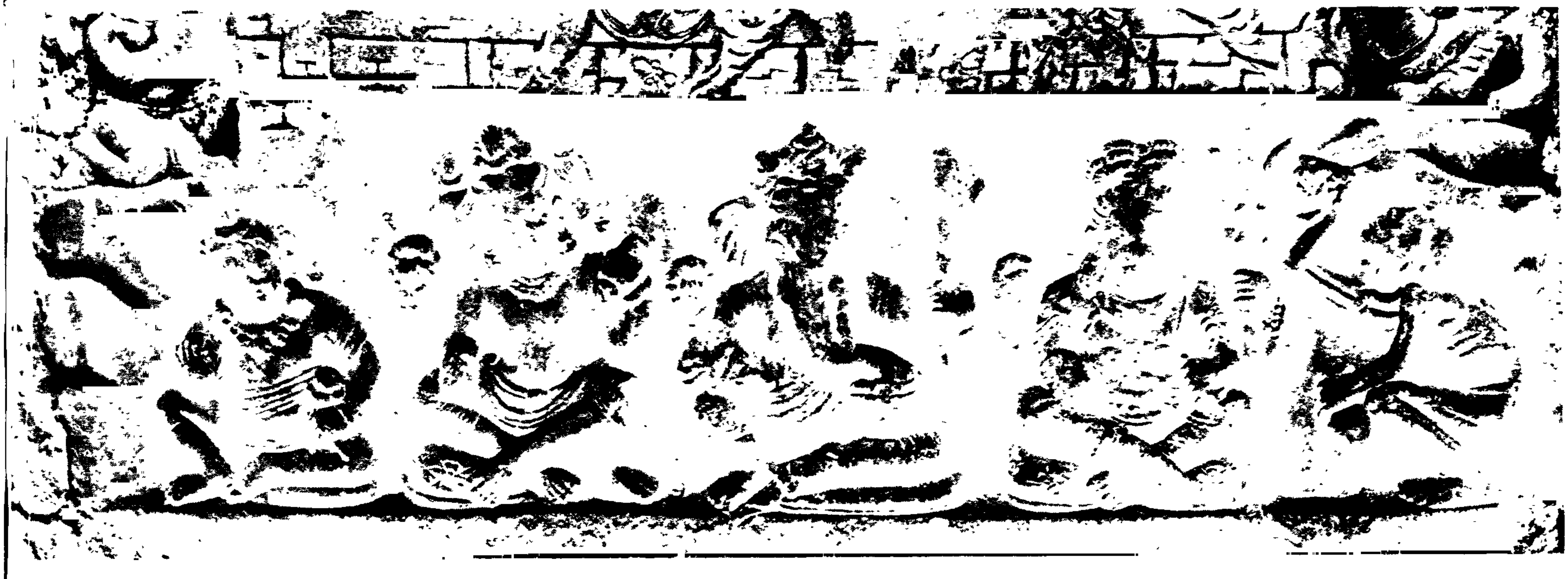

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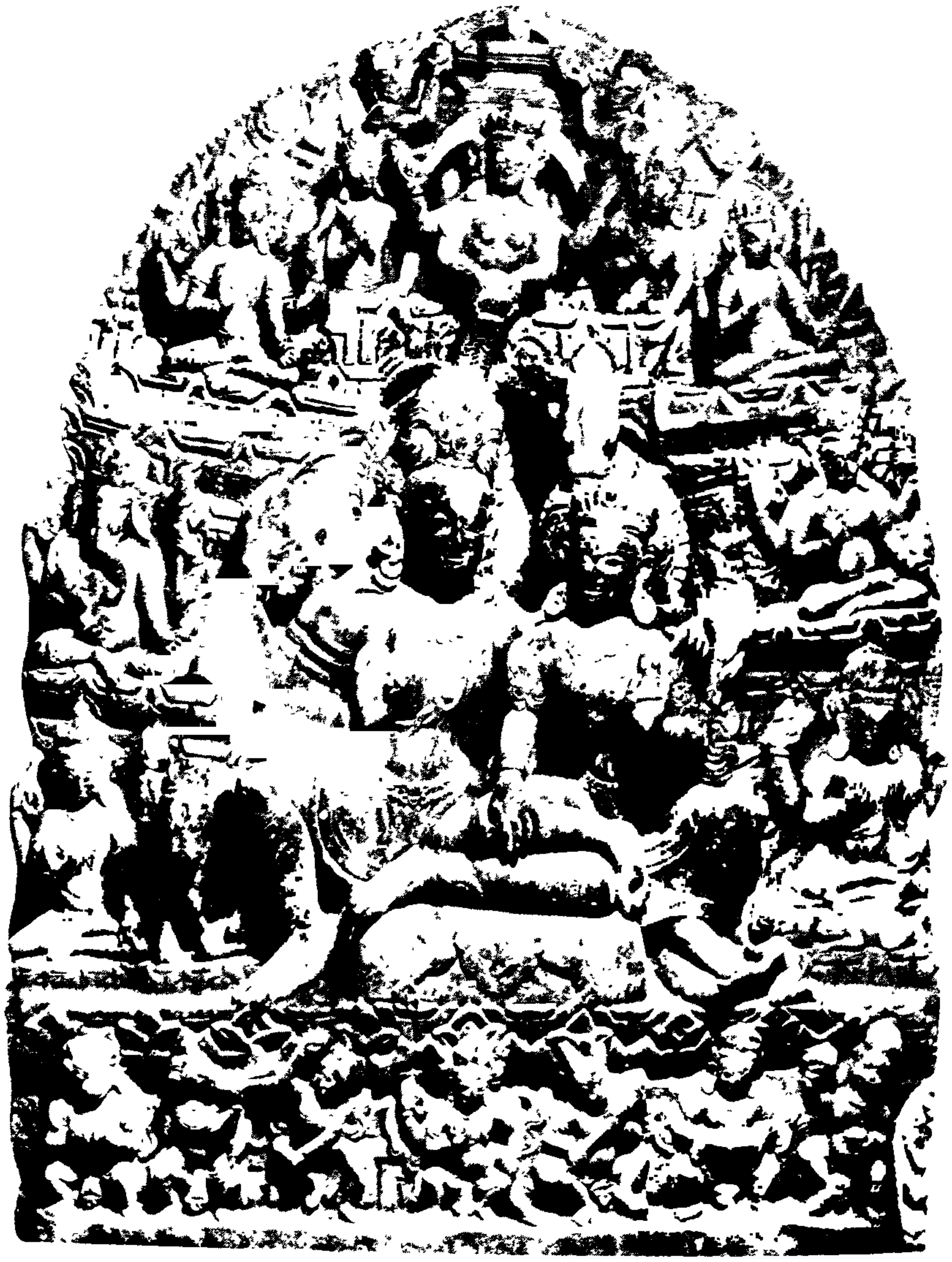

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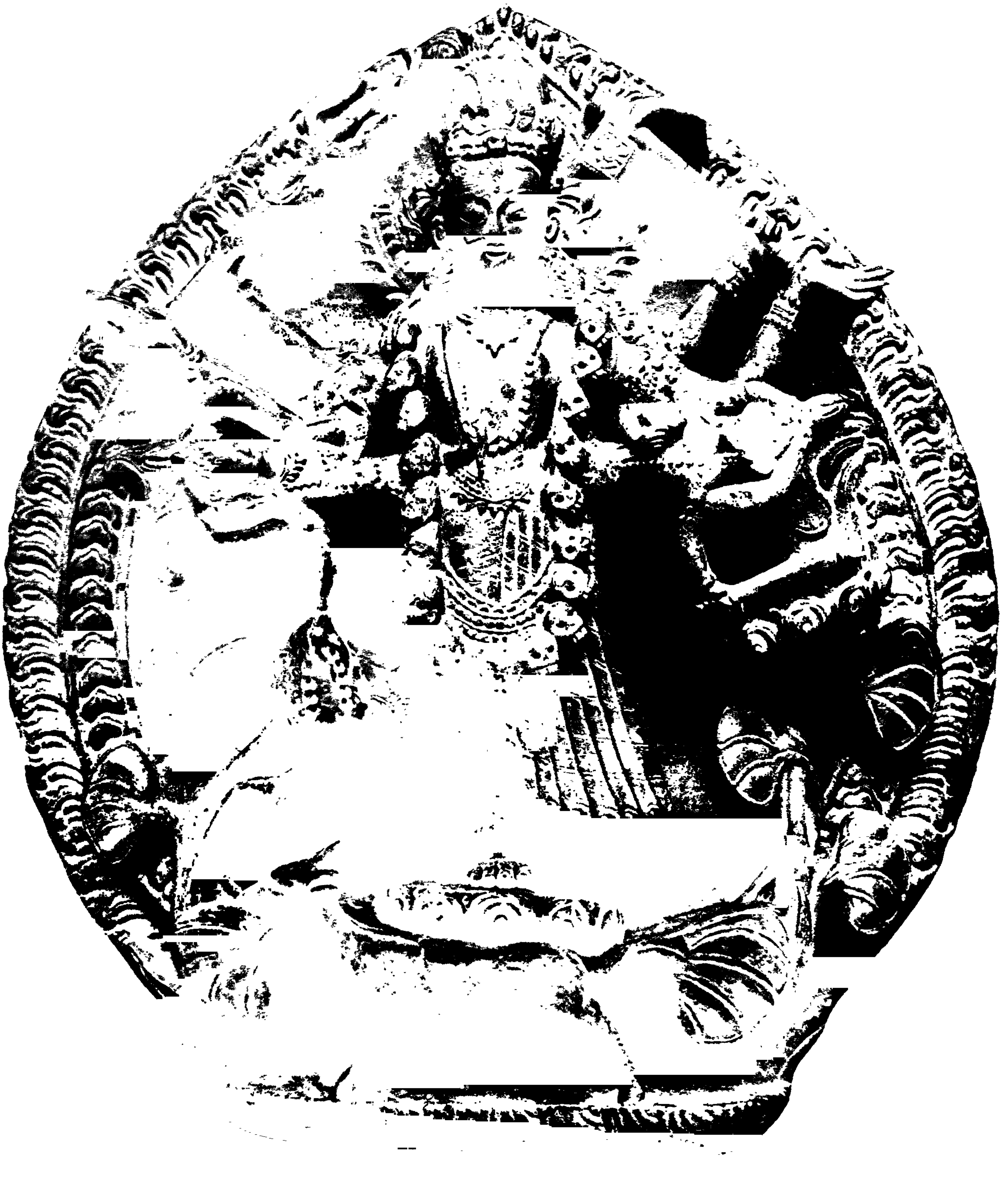

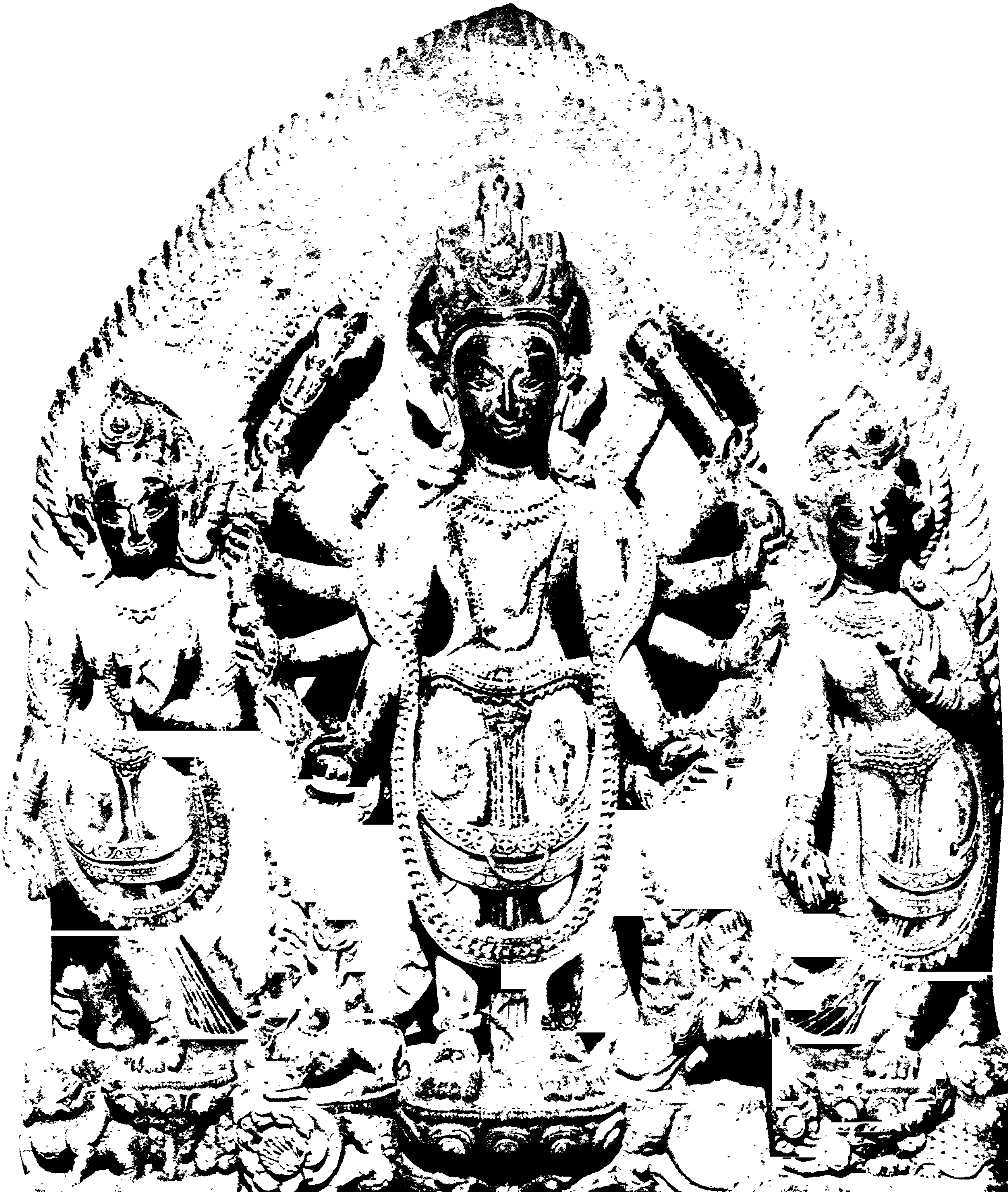

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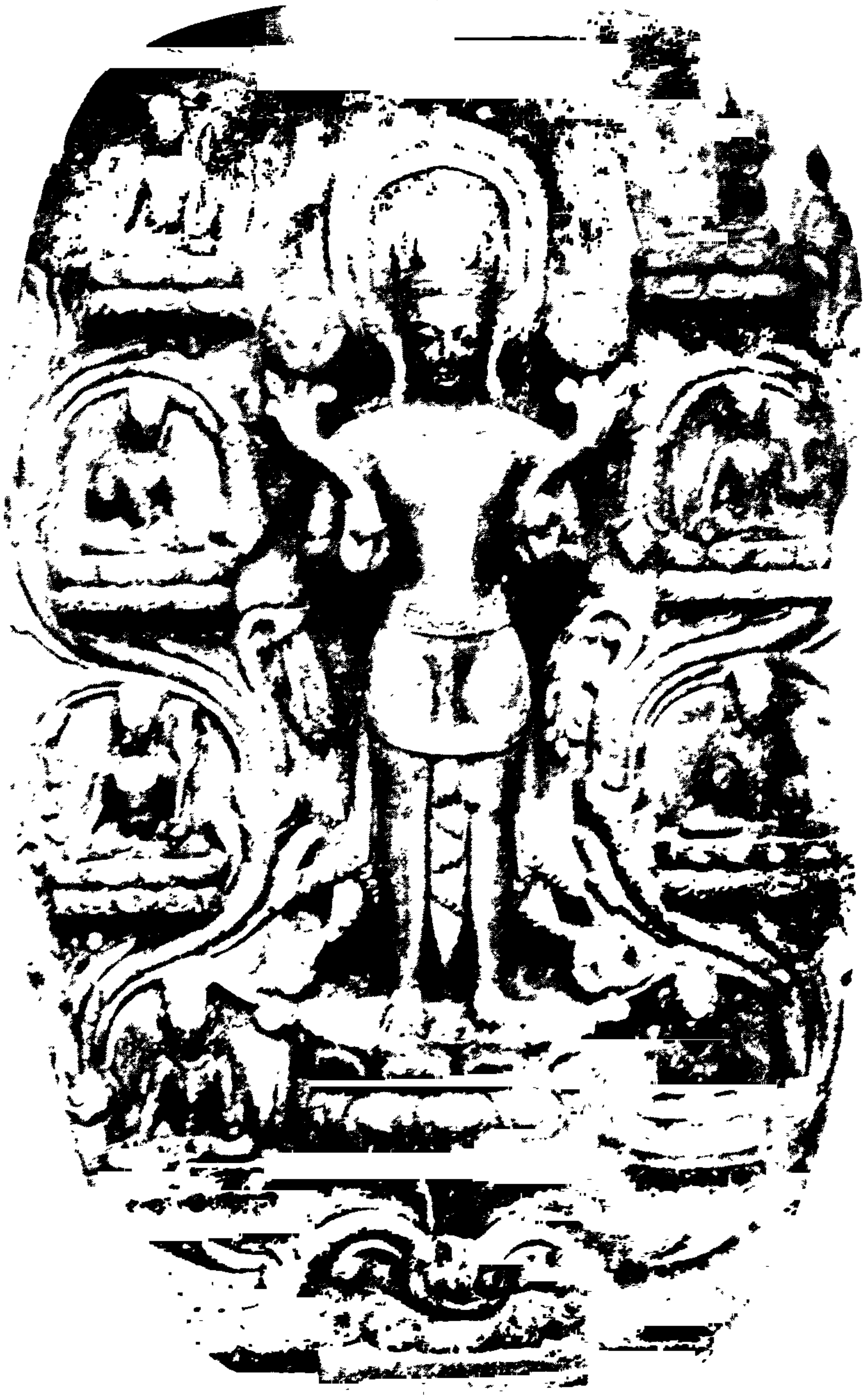

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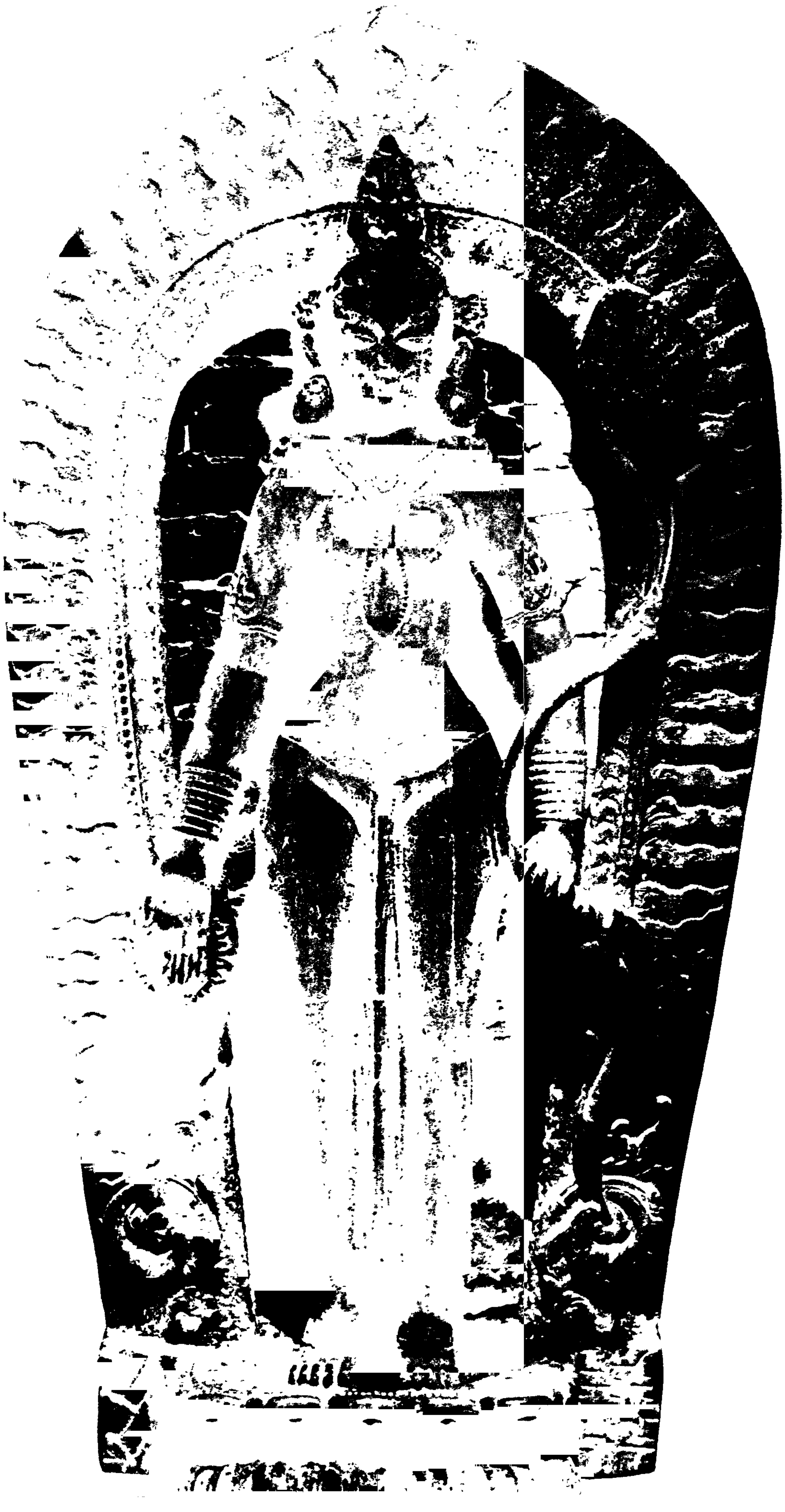

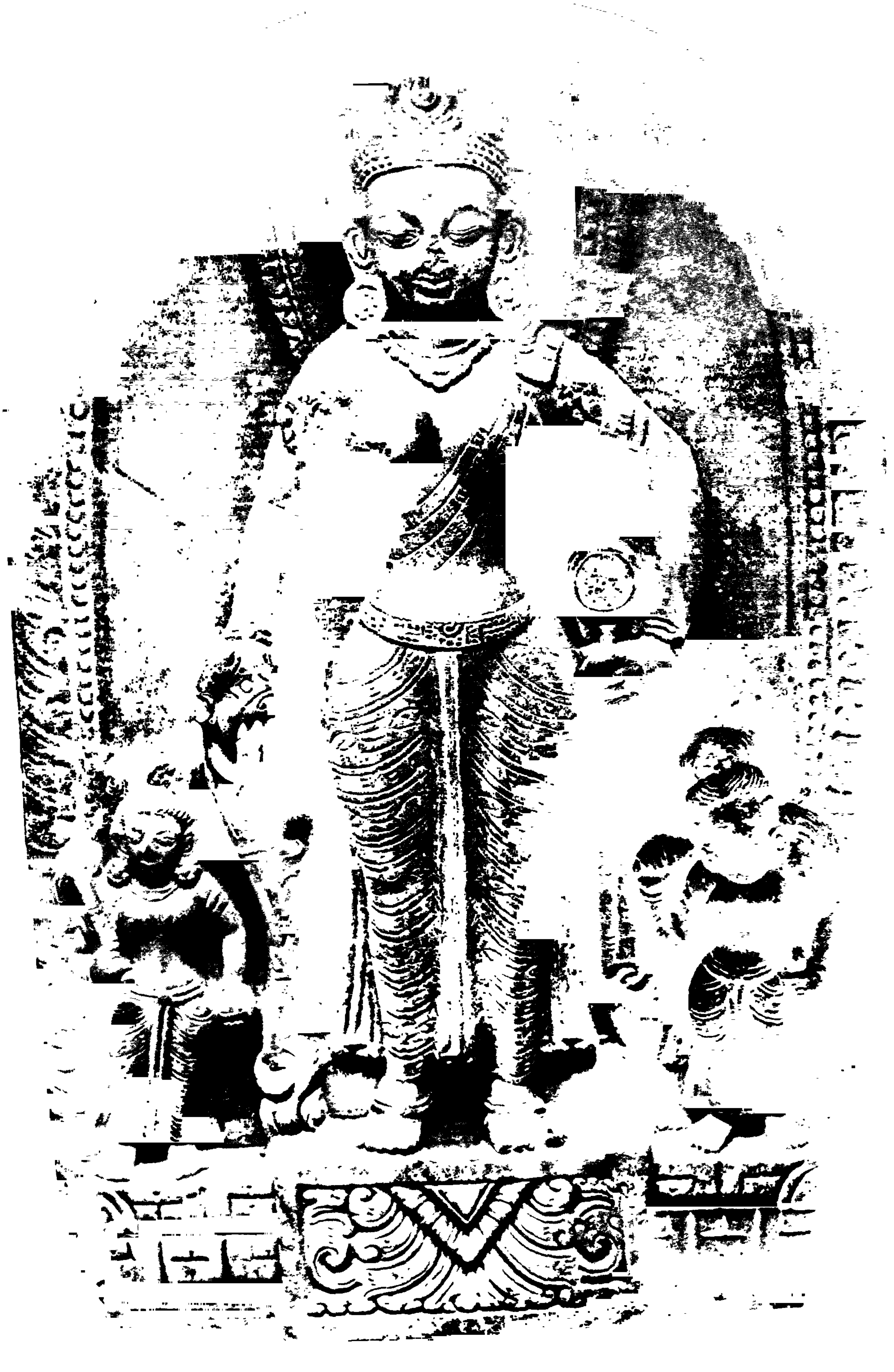

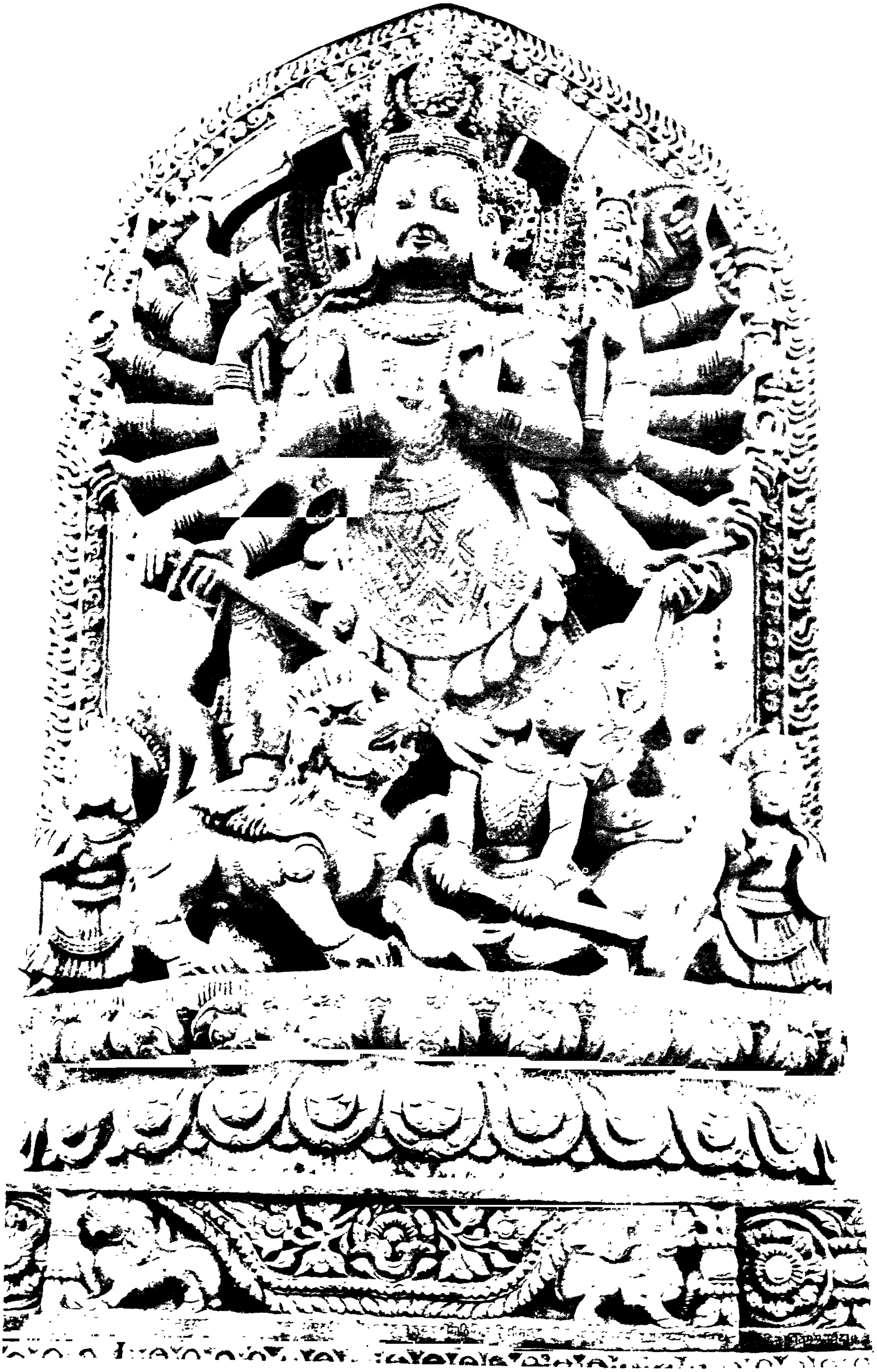

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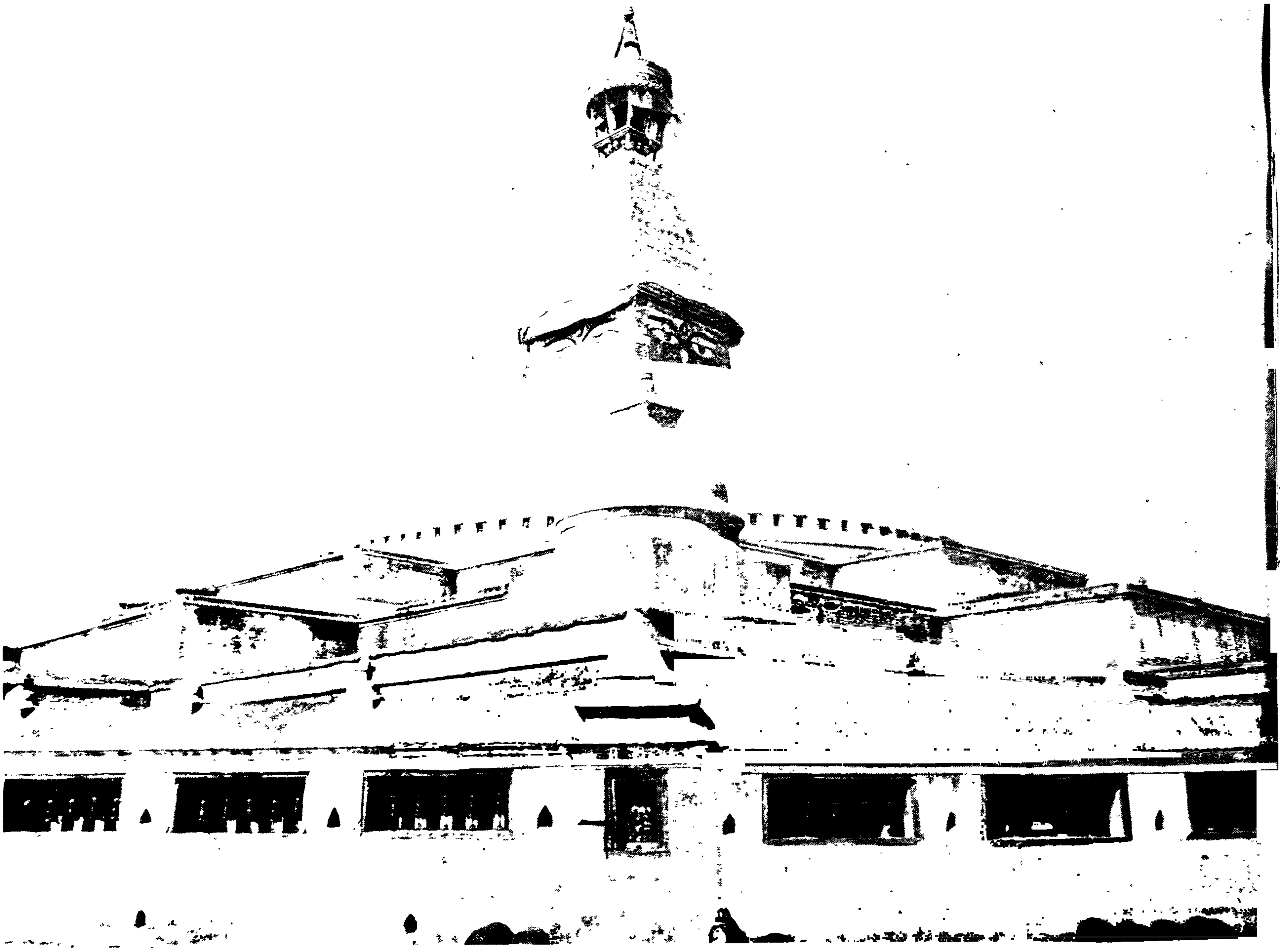

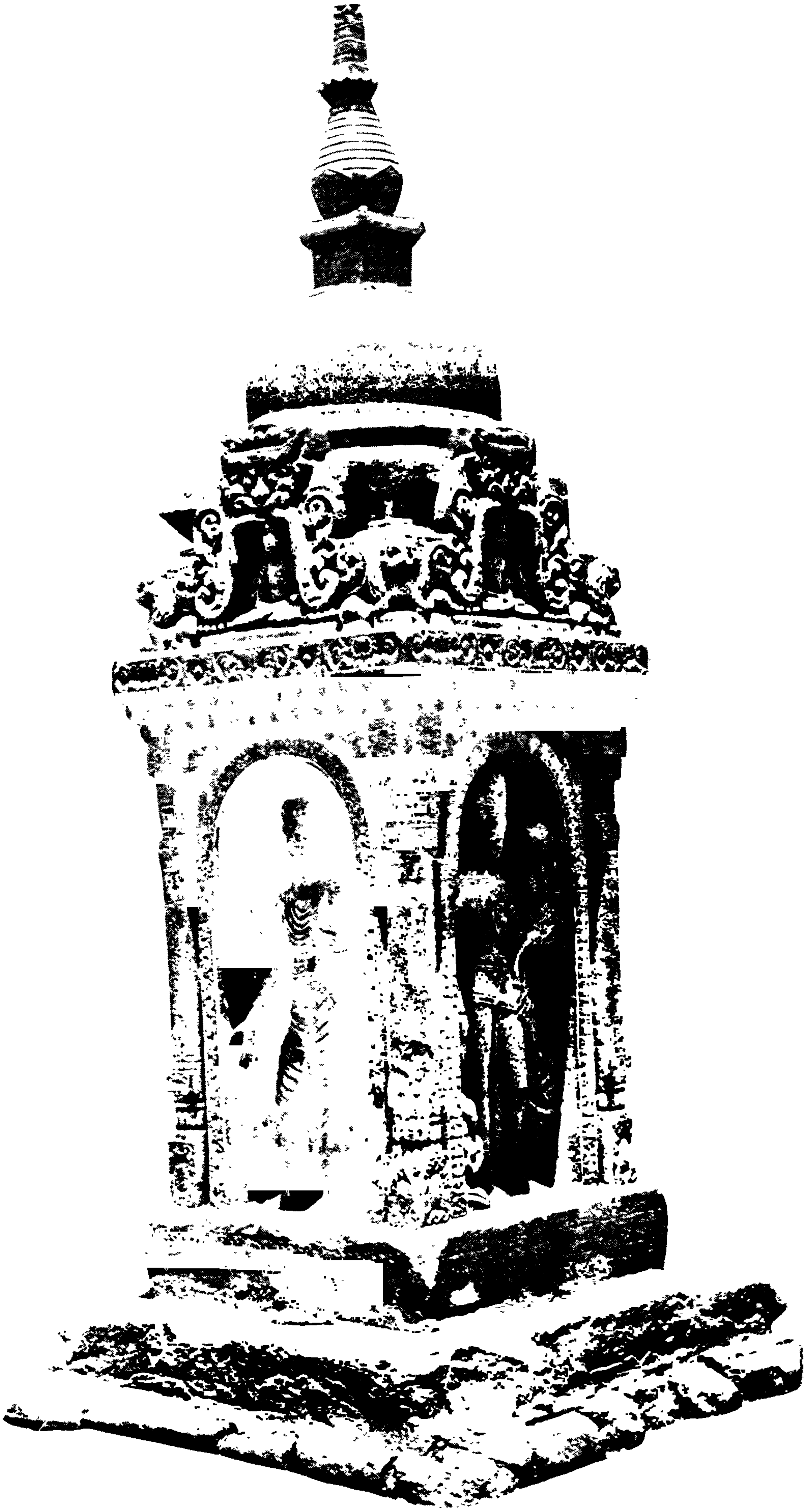

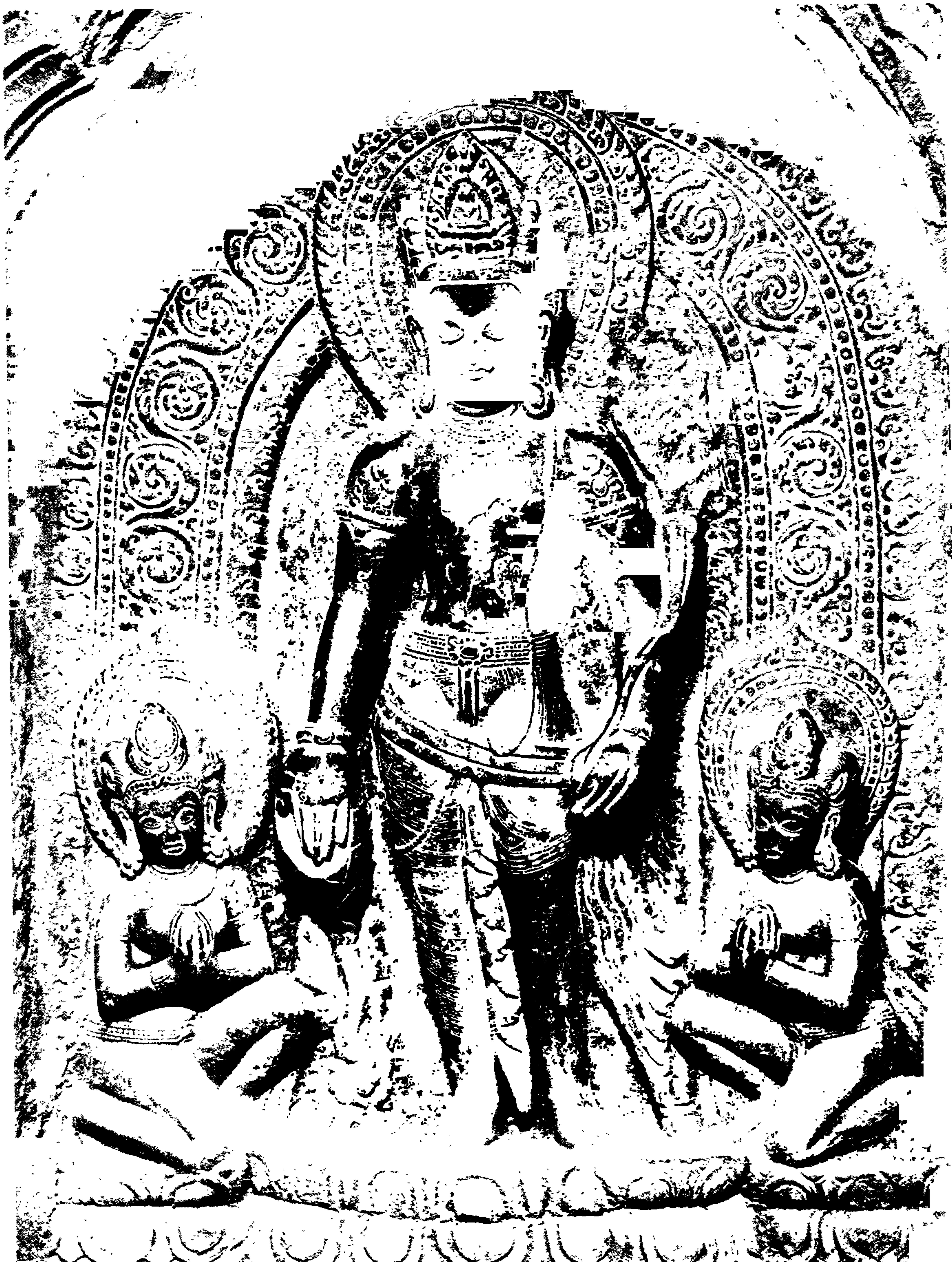

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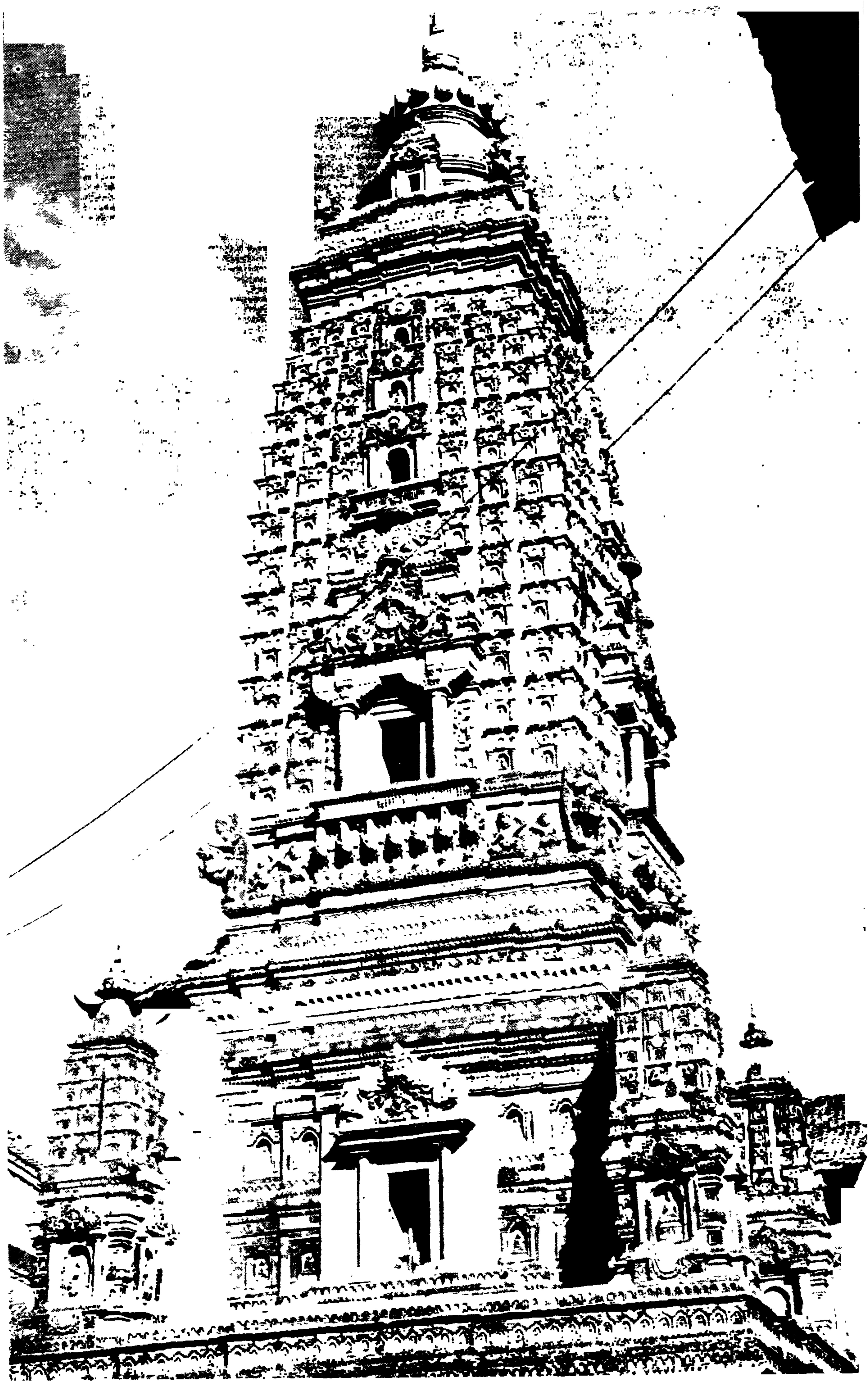

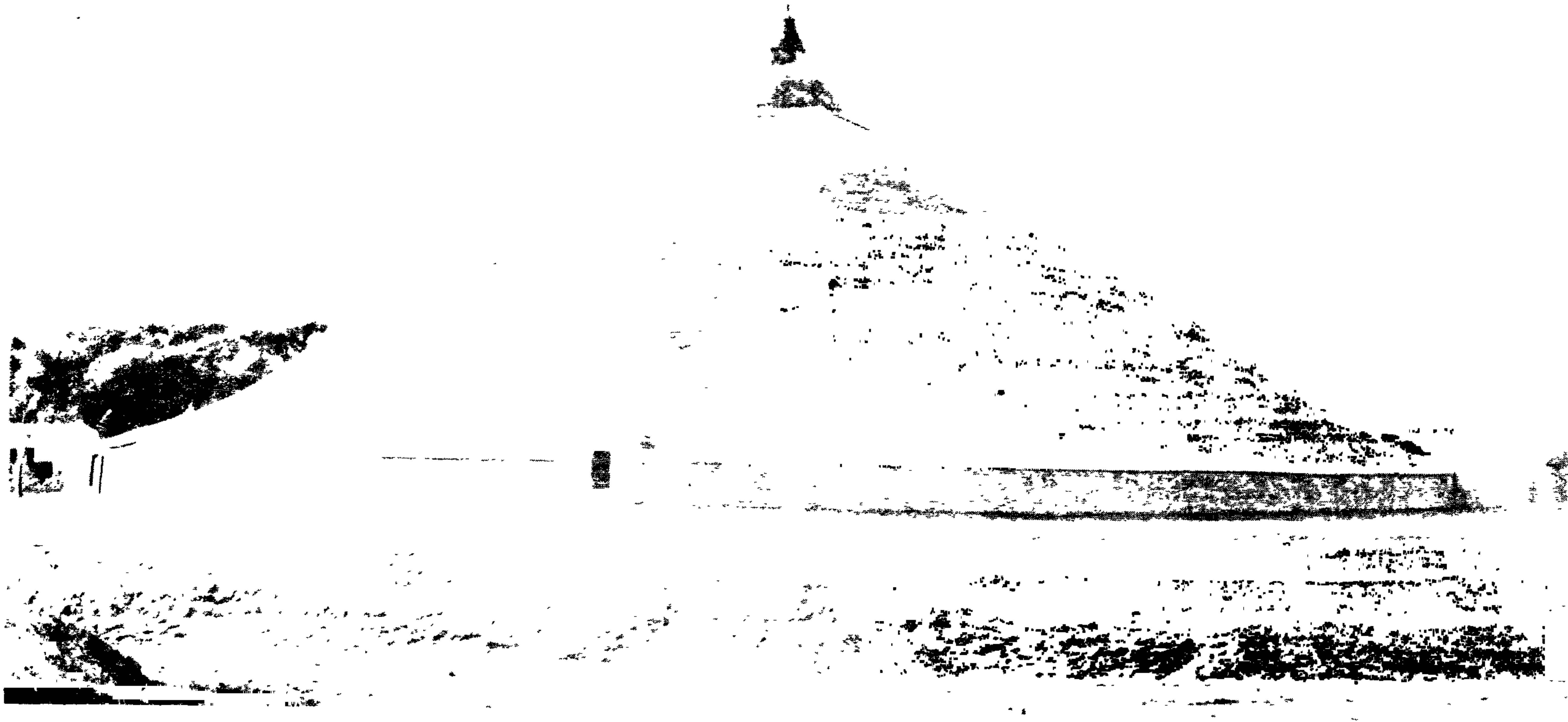

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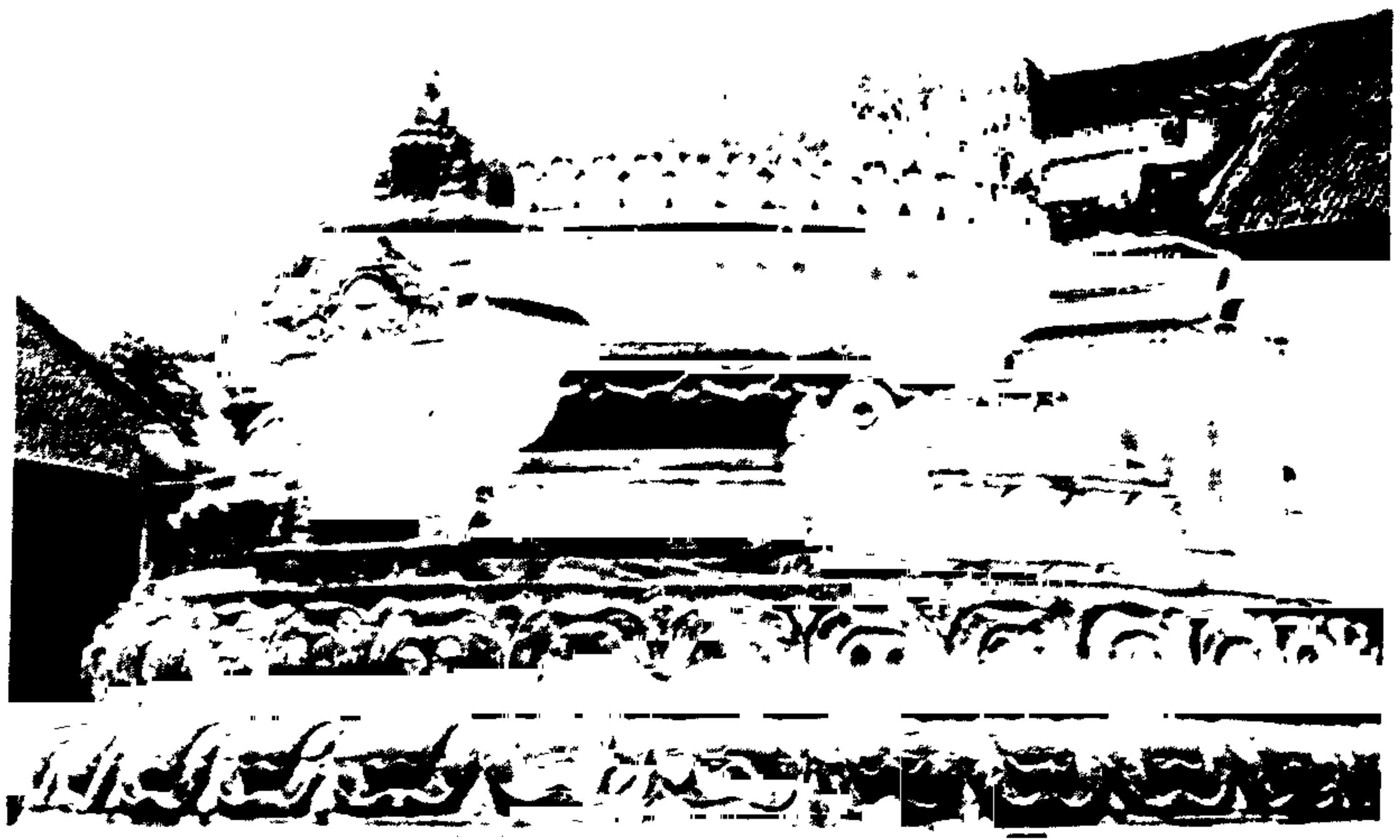

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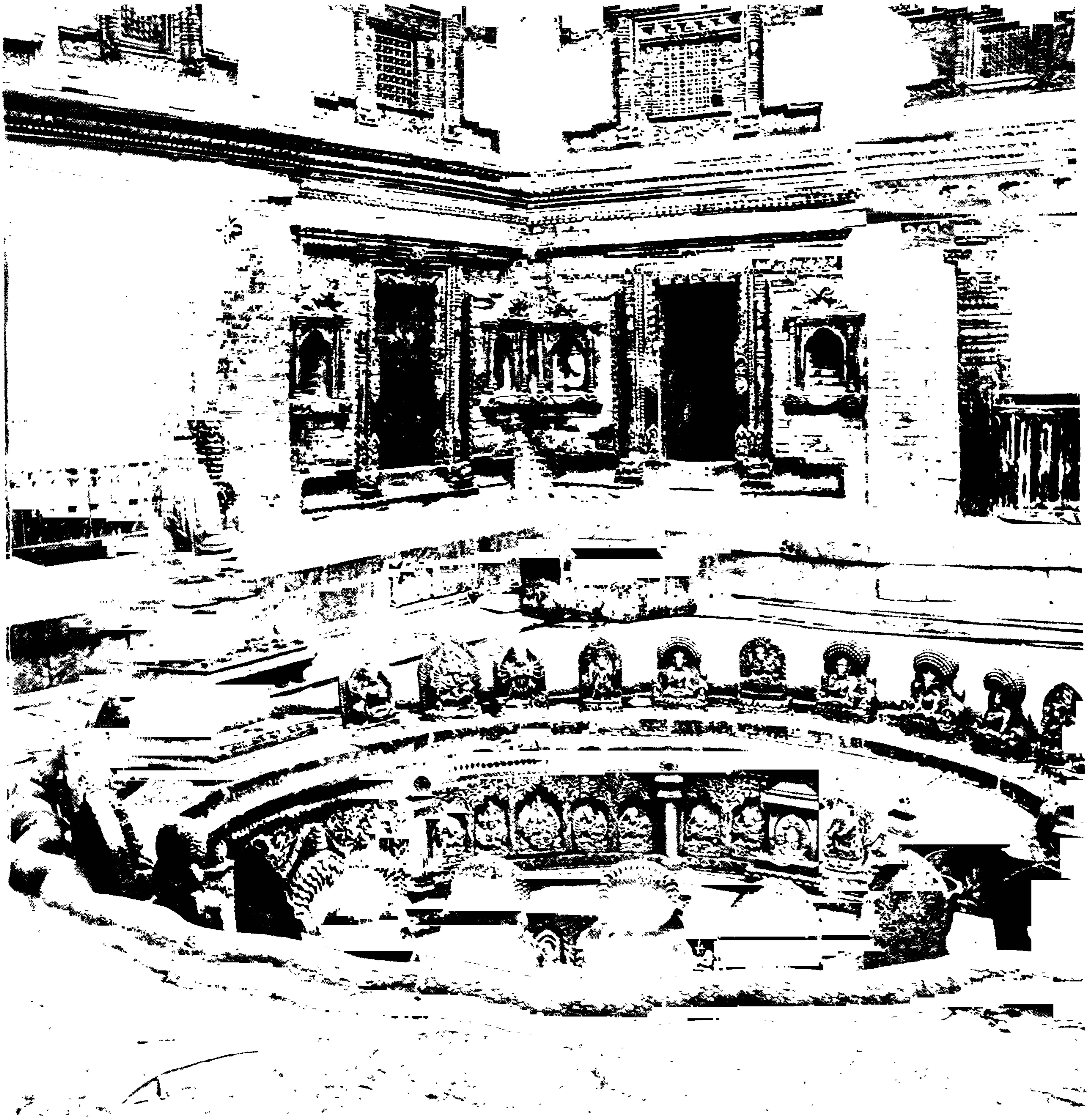

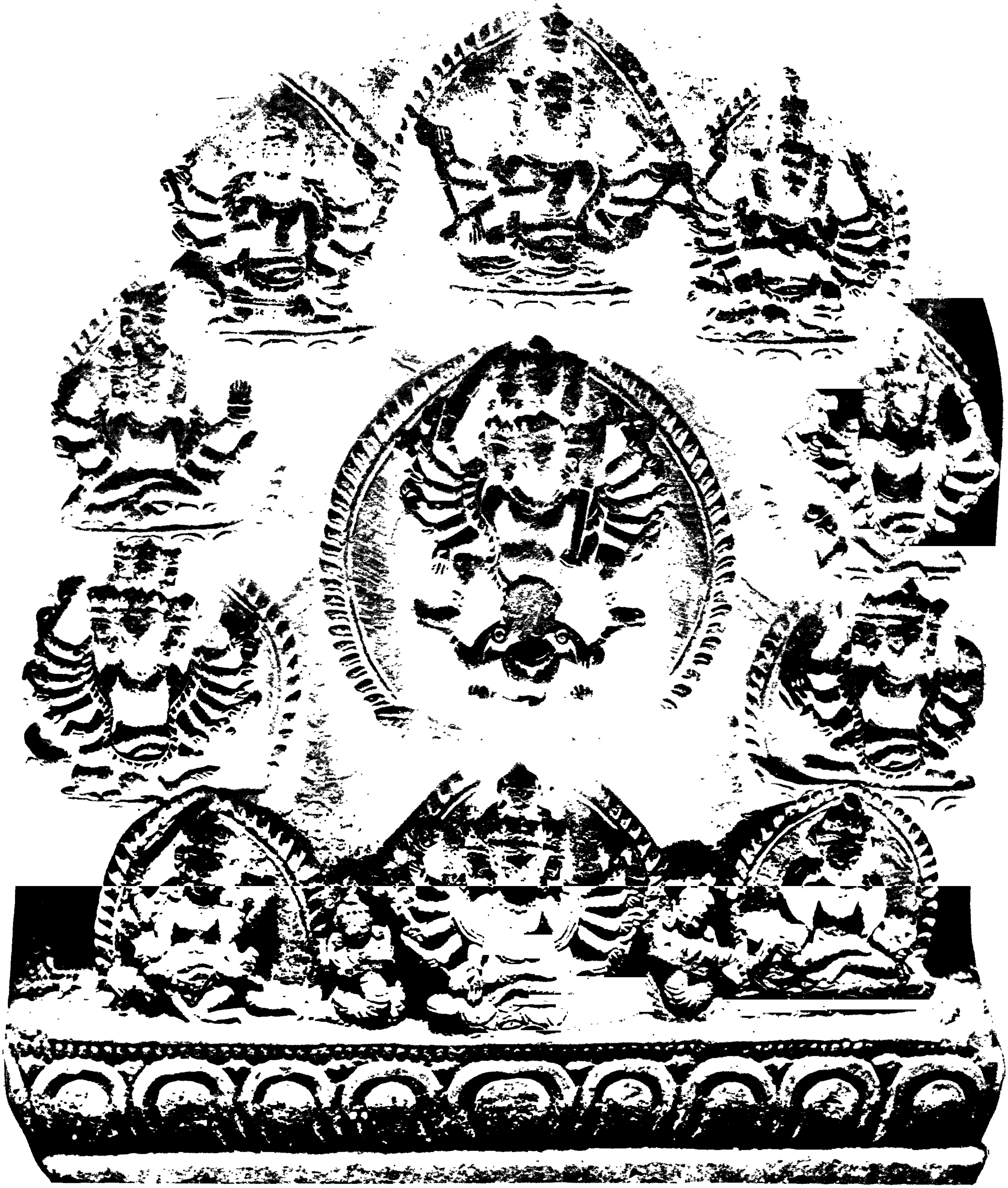

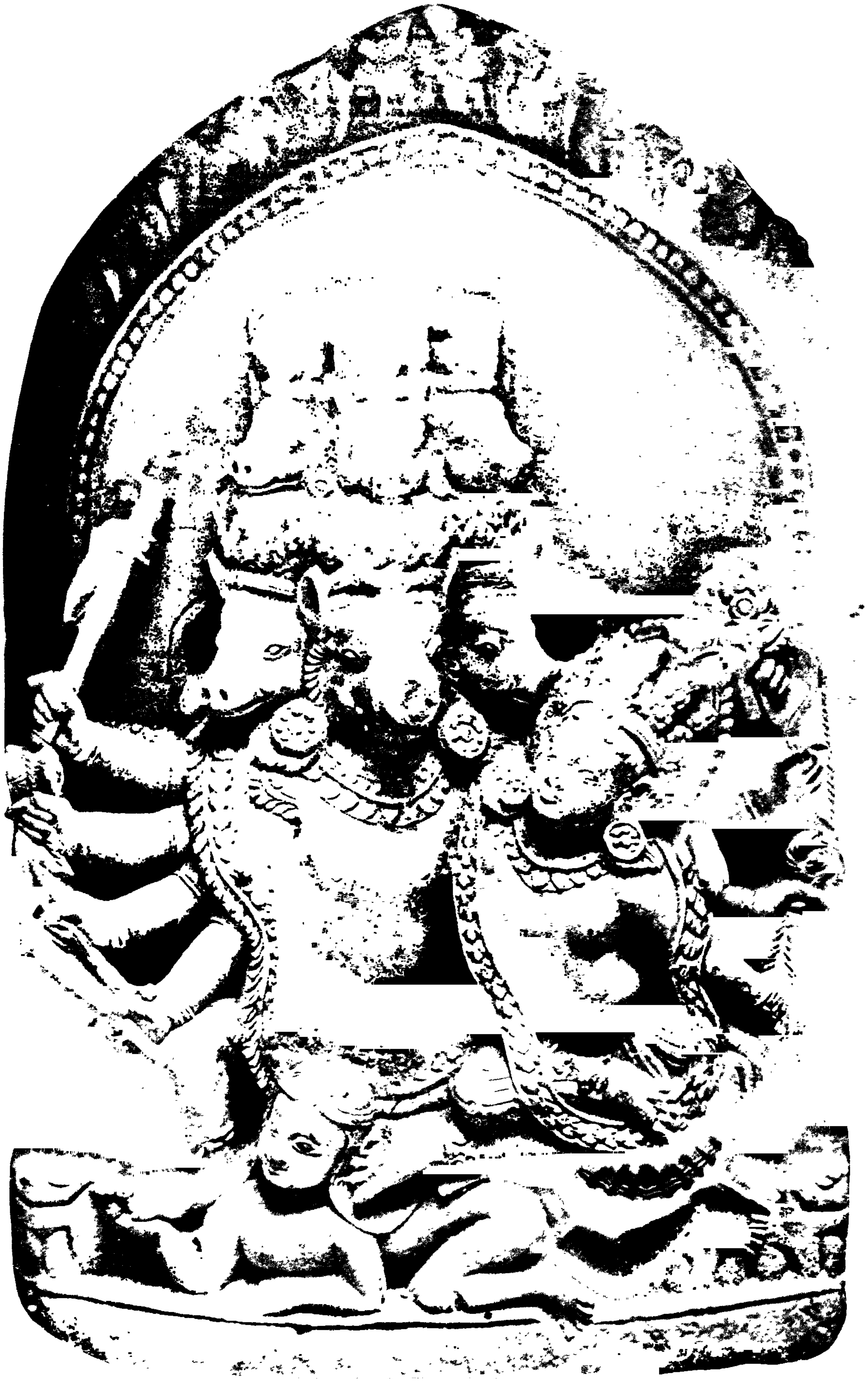

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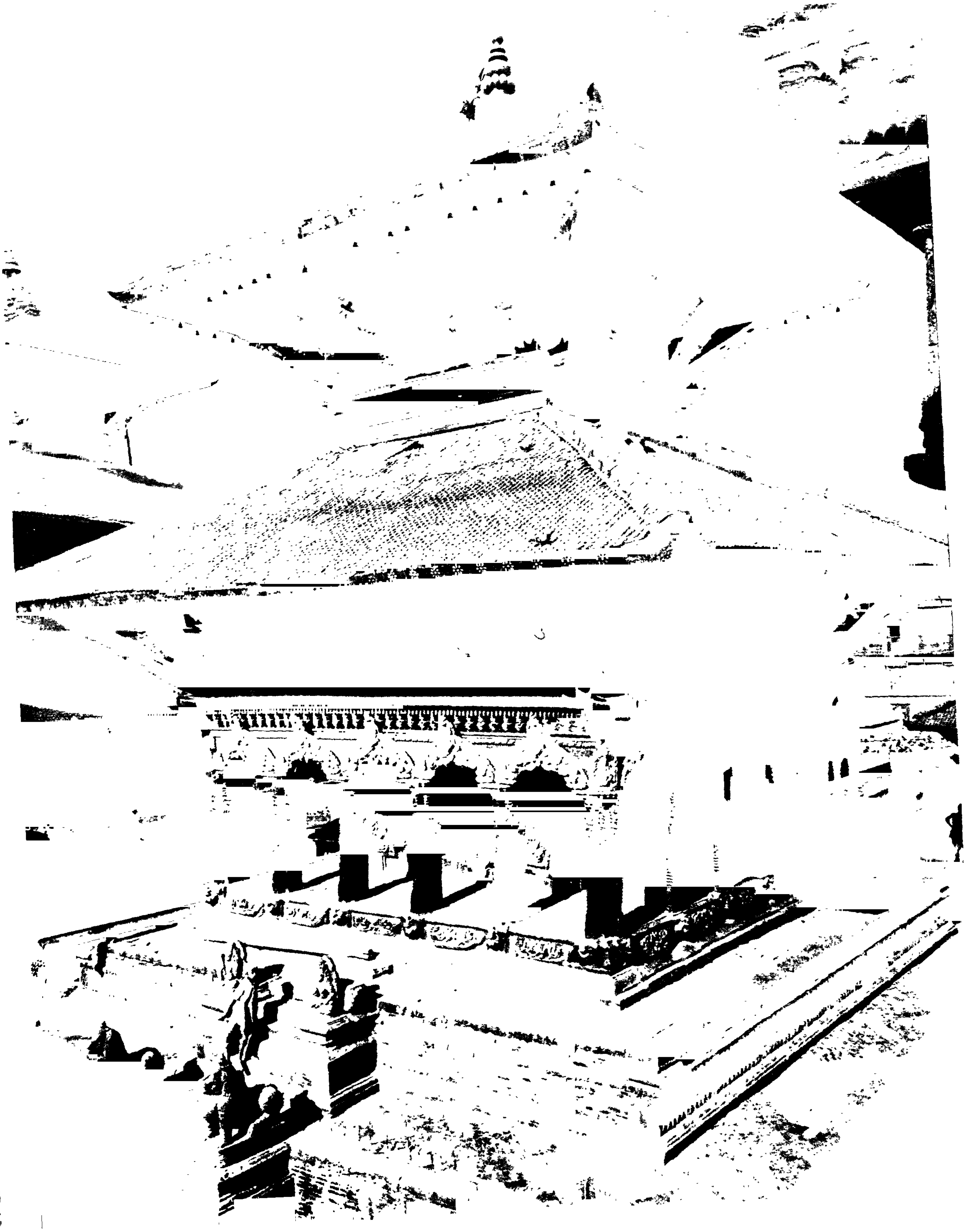

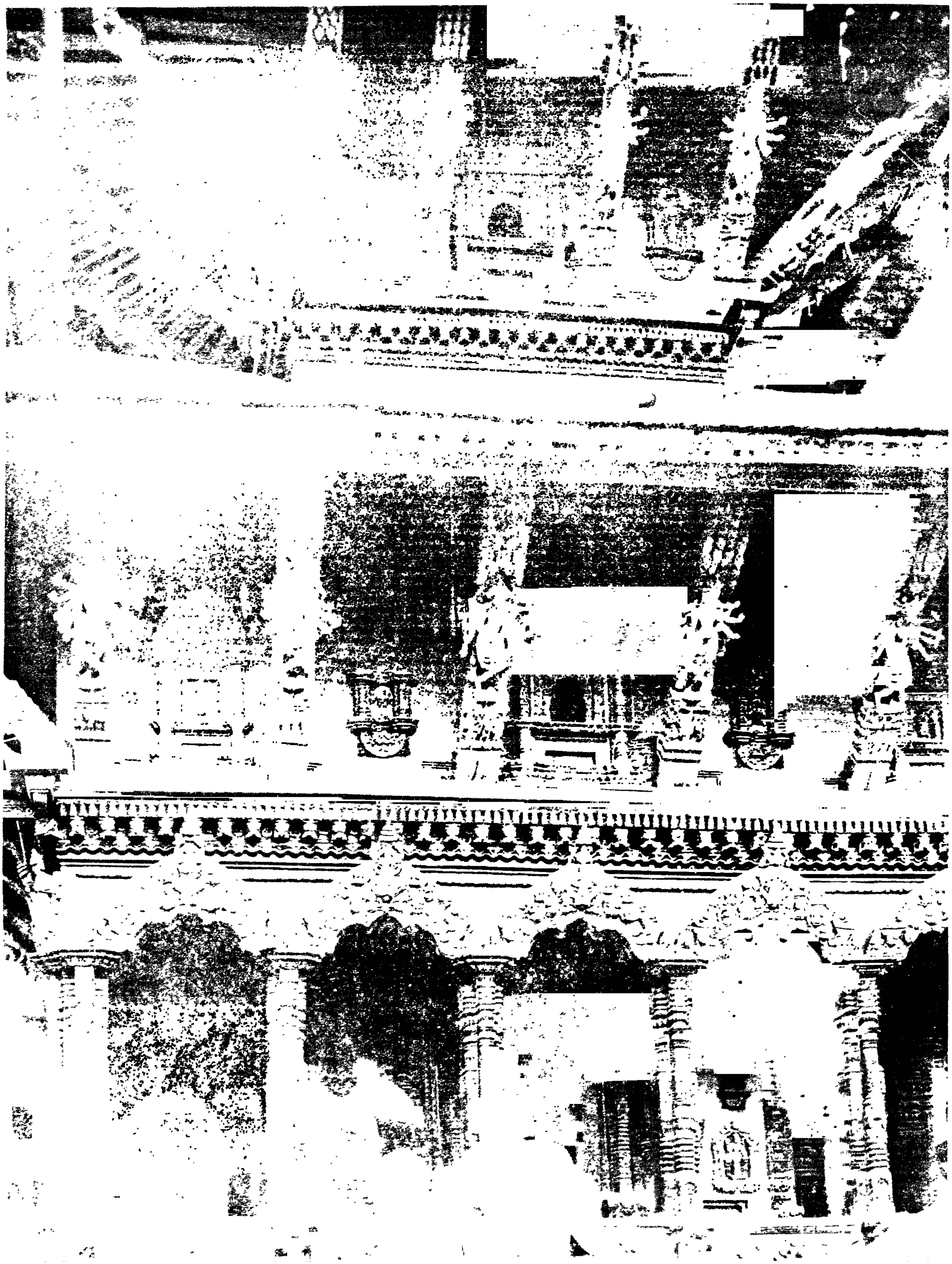

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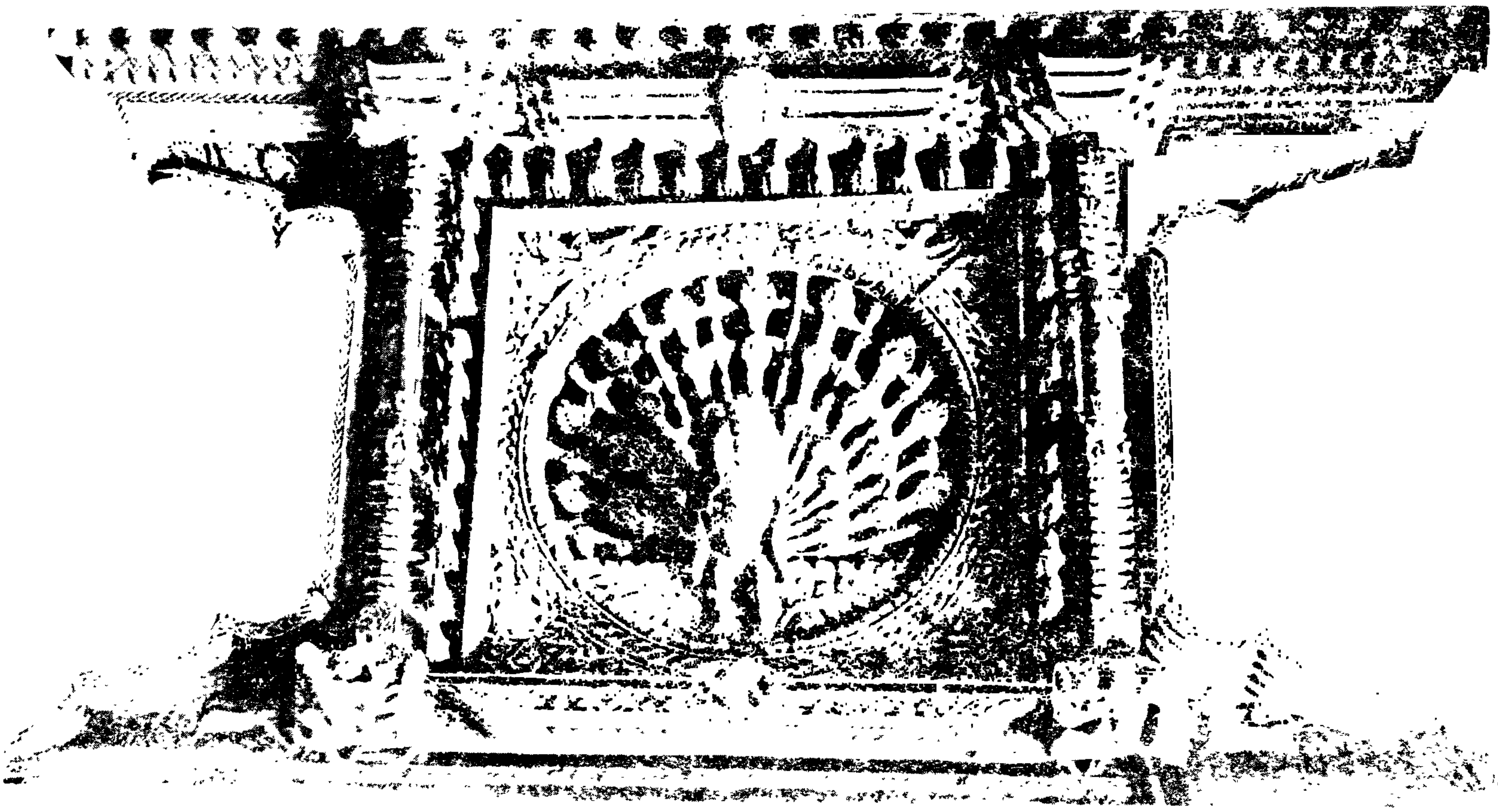

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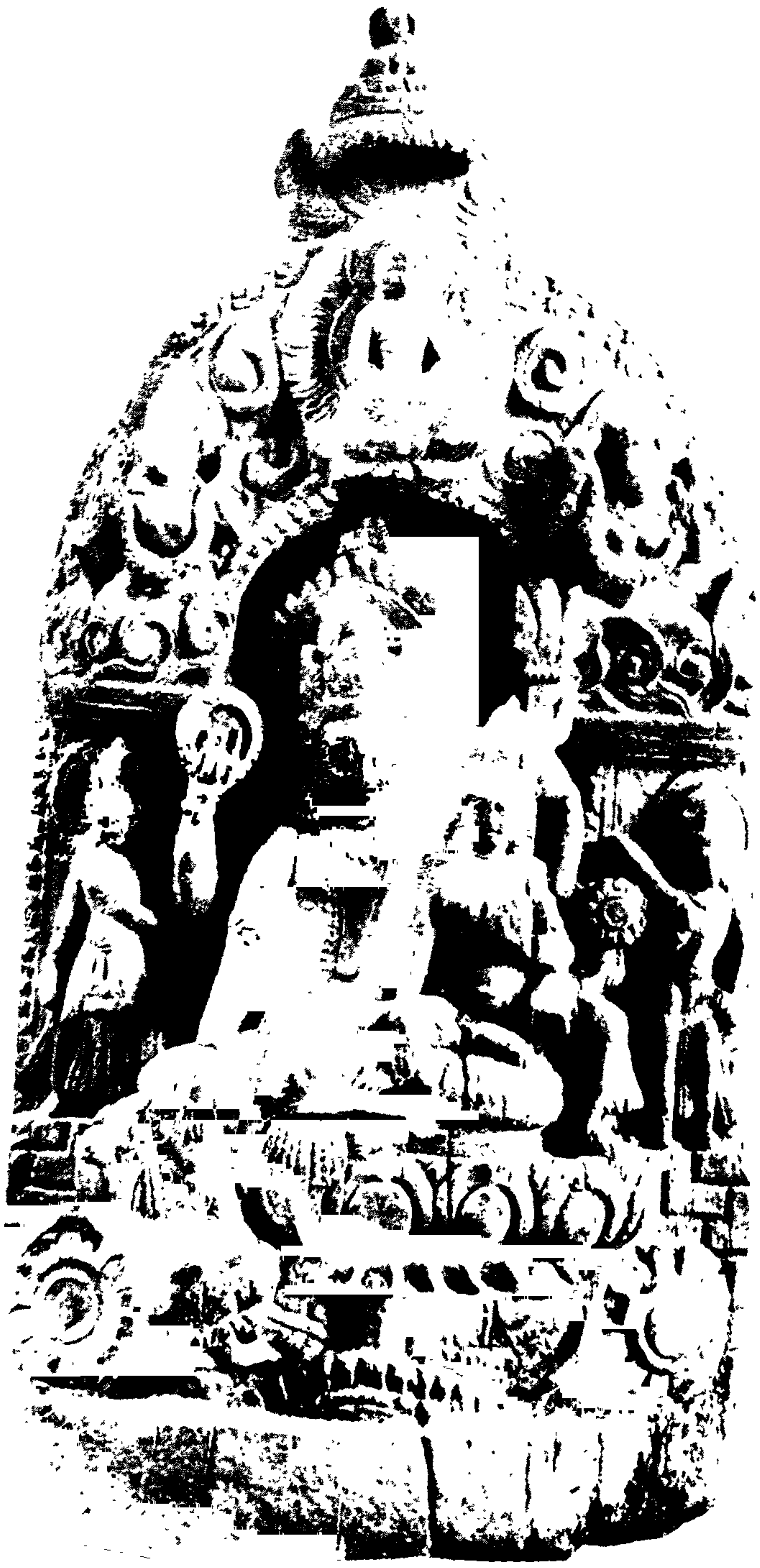

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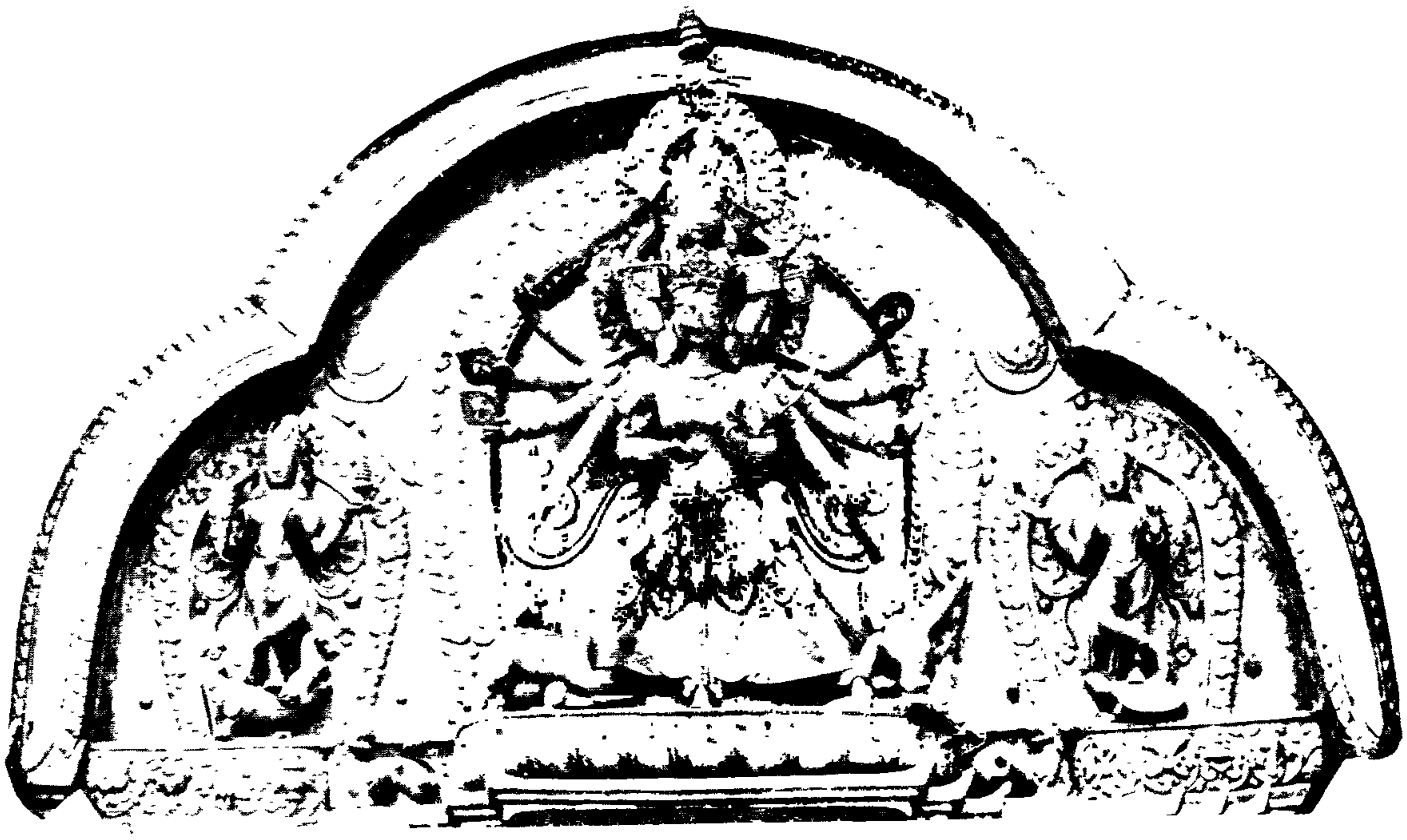

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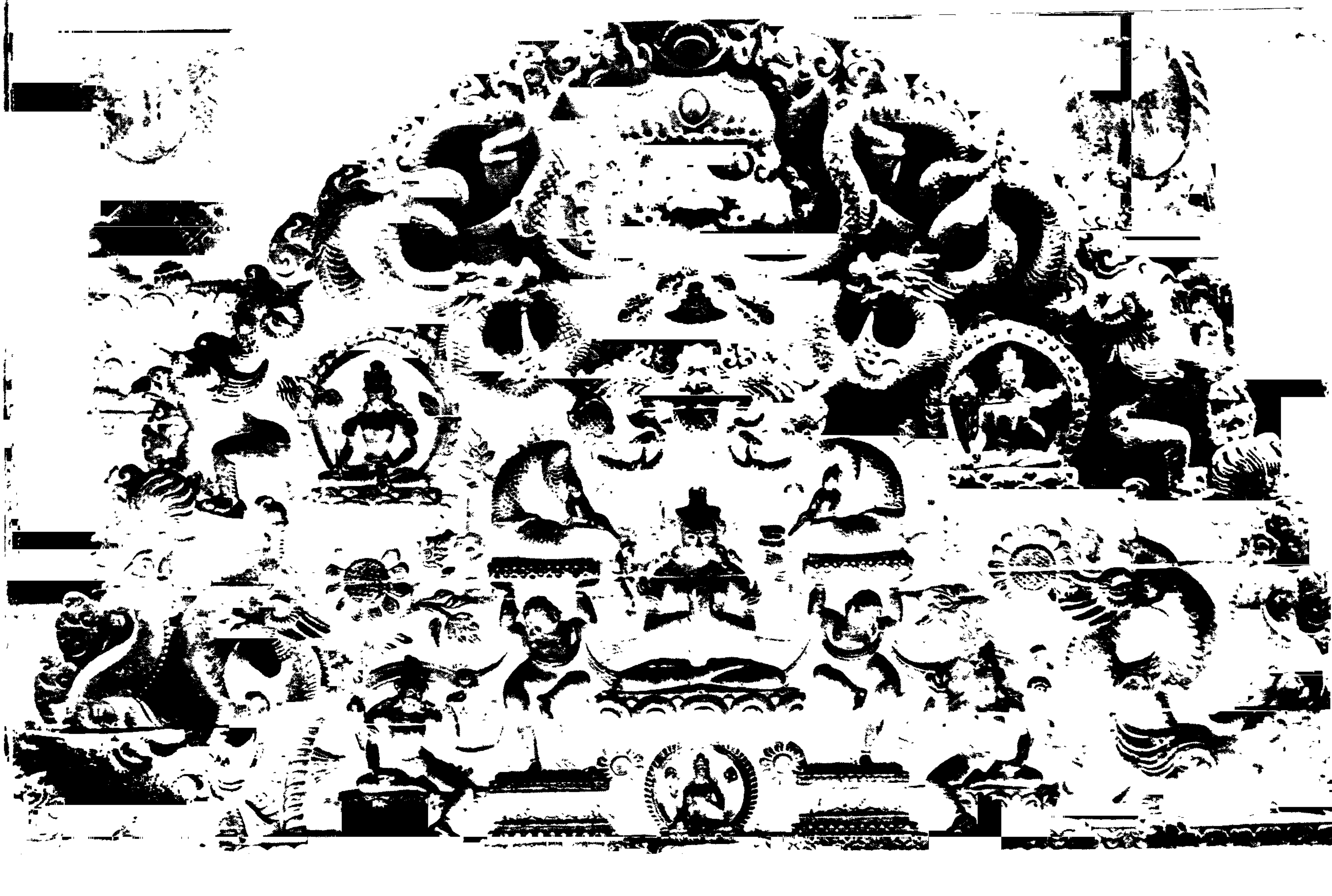

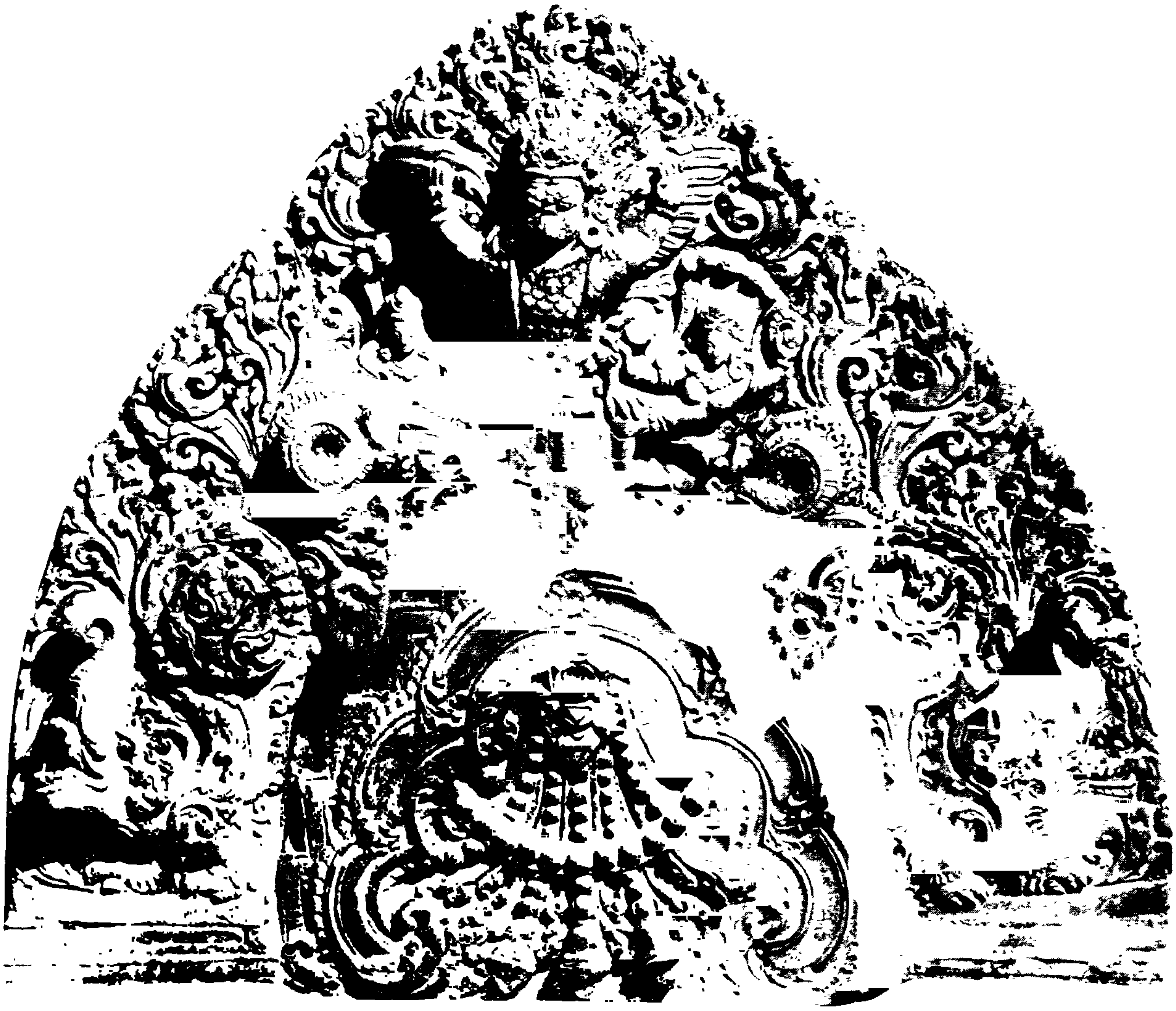

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